EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT THROUGH PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION

AN EXPLORATION OF ACTION RESEARCH AS A MEANS OF ENHANCING TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN CYPRUS

by

HELEN MELI

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
1999

ABSTRACT

The thesis seeks to challenge the existing approach to teacher development in Cyprus. To do this it reports an action research project in which a group of art teachers were brought together to tackle problems which they had experienced in their own classrooms and, as a consequence, to reflect both upon the centrally devised curriculum and also the extent to which they are able to employ their own professionalism to contribute to the on-going development of their specialist area.

The research is reported in three sections: Introduction, Intervention, and Conclusions. The Introduction provides a situational analysis in which the existing state of art teaching in Cyprus is reviewed, including an account of present practices with regard to the in-service education and training of teachers. There is also a review of current thinking about the nature of teacher development and its connection to the task of curriculum improvement. This is followed by a chapter on methodology which examines the adequacy of action research as a means for engaging the active and productive participation of teachers in the solution of professional problems.

In the Intervention section, Phase I describes the search for willing participants; Phase II describes the formation of a group prepared to undertake the work; and Phase III describes the implementation of the action research process.

The Conclusion seeks to evaluate what has been achieved and to consider the implications for the successful management of curriculum change.

A central purpose of the research has been to enable the group members to adopt the role of active agents and decision makers. This approach represents a major challenge to existing practices in Cyprus where change is for the most part policy-driven and teachers are expected to adopt a purely passive role in relation to the development of both the curriculum and their own teaching skills.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INDEX OF ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

Color Plates:

Data:

Figures:

Tables:

Documents:

Note: All the Color Plates and Data of the index can be found at the end of each section. The Tables, Documents, Figures of Chapter 3 (Methodology) and a few of the Data can be found within the text.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the Art teachers of the team for all their valuable input and collaboration. Their devoted effort made this study possible.

I would also like to thank my husband and children for all their help and encouragement.

Last but not least I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Janet Harland whose valuable support and criticisms assisted me to find my way through the difficult process of writing a thesis.

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1

Establishing the Problem, Describing the Context, The Purpose: Research Questions

In the following chapter I wish to explore the establishment of the problem for this research. My concerns about particular areas of the educational scene in Cyprus will be indicated followed by the emerging arguments. These will be supported through detailed and accurate description of the context with reference to the problematic nature of the role of the art teacher in Cyprus; the art curriculum itself, and the current teacher development schemes. This will lead into a clarification of the purposes of this study which I shall seek to define as research questions.

Establishing the Problem

I have been involved in the educational system in Cyprus as an art teacher. However due to my interest in curriculum development I was seconded part time to the Curriculum Development Center of the Ministry of Education. I worked closely with art inspectors in the development of learning materials for art teaching in Cyprus. This included the planning and the promoting of new art teaching strategies in art and art history.

Besides my active involvement in committees on art curriculum development, I was assigned, as a staff member of the Curriculum Development Center, to write a work-book for the art class to be used by students in junior high schools throughout Cyprus. This was an attempt to improve art teaching by organizing artistic experiences and setting objectives in the teaching of art. This aimed at helping the teachers by supplying the students with reading and rich visual material regarding the explanation and understanding of artistic concepts.

This however, proved to be a superficial attempt since the book was sent out to teachers without any type of support in the form of changes in teaching strategies or curriculum changes in order to facilitate the implementation of the book. I was not happy with the relationship I was permitted to have with the teachers in reference to the teaching materials that I was developing. I was not allowed by the system to approach art teachers at their schools and discuss with them how the program could be implemented in their classrooms. I was to think and write what was appropriate, sent it out to the schools and allow teachers to do what they thought with it without being allowed to assess the impact of the book relating to actual classroom teaching. Needless to say a very limited amount of this development work actually reached the art students in schools.

Even though I was active as a teacher and a developer in the area of art education in secondary schools, my efforts did not meet my expectations. I felt that things were not changing. I was confronted with a variety of many-sided problems which became increasingly complicated as I became farther involved in the process of teaching. After sixteen years in education and not withstanding the insecurity and confusion I was experiencing, I decided to challenge the existing situation even though this challenge was not as yet fully defined.

Due to my training in the curriculum of art education in the United States, I was increasingly sensing a tension between my perceptions of what directions art education should be taking in the Cypriot public schools and the directions offered through the official policies of the art inspector and the curriculum. Art teaching methodologies stressed mainly the teaching of art techniques with very limited attempts to deal with the creative aspects of teaching art to school children. Even though I was placed in a position where I could offer alternatives as a developer, I was nevertheless forced to modify my aspirations to measure up to officially prescribed policies of the Ministry of Education and the art inspector.

The imposed directions handed-down by policy-makers to schools proved irrelevant to the Cypriot educational scene since they seem to apply to a context in which there is scope for teacher initiative, a social environment which stimulates learning, and where teachers are more developed as professionals. Policy-makers prevent teacher development courses from being a learning and growing experience for these concerned because seminars are mainly theory-based, teachers are not permitted to exhibit original thinking nor challenge imposed directions or established theories by citing practical teaching problems. This secures for the policy-makers a total control over teachers.

This total control does not permit teachers to perceive clearly the significance of what they experience in classroom practice. They merely see an illusion of what they experience thus creating a tension build-up between the imposed-theory and what the practitioners are experiencing in the classroom.

Briefly stated, the practitioner's own perceptions of his/her practical experience in the classroom are denied. This denial of teachers' own practical experience creates problems in the teaching of art and furthermore, it stops any improvement from taking place by shutting-off doors to alternatives. The gaps existing between imposed directions and teachers, between teachers and the art curriculum, create a negative environment not conducive to effective learning experiences for both teachers and students. What seems to prevail is a continuous denial of problems.

It appears that the discussion above affects various aspects of education such as the teacher, the student, the curriculum and teacher development courses. In addition various obstacles are cited: imposed policies and established teaching theories, lack of communication between teachers and the system, and finally an inappropriate teacher development scheme.

Considering the above, an appropriate area for research was sought. What should be involved in my investigation into the problems already outlined? I needed a way in; what would be a key area of investigation to address my concerns?

Originally, I focused on my concern over the serious lack of learning exhibited in students of secondary education in the subject of art. This was clearly indicated through students' negative responses when they were asked about what they remembered from last year's art class. Furthermore, no build-up of any skills nor any development of awareness about artistic matters seemed to be taking place in the art room. I suspected that this lack of learning was mainly attributed to the ineffectiveness of teaching methods and the inappropriateness of the art curriculum since in most classrooms teaching is based on a monologue conducted by the teacher. Students are not actively involved. Thus my original idea for an investigation centered on the student and his/her ineffective learning in art. I felt that the objective of showing that students are not learning properly in art might motivate teachers into "seeing" the need for changes in their teaching methods by suggesting the need for changes in the curriculum and also that they become more critical of their own limitations.

The other factor which originally urged me to focus on the students was that I felt it would be too difficult to approach the teachers themselves because in the Cypriot educational scene the practitioners seldom collaborate. They do not accept new ideas easily. They prefer to keep themselves within the limits of their own ideas and not use ideas of other colleagues. As a rule, outside intrusion is refused by practitioners because it presents irrelevant imposed theories which they dismiss as inappropriate to their teaching needs. Therefore, I felt that the best alternative would be to investigate limitations in student learning, and attempt to reach the teachers through enhancing their awareness of these limitations.

However, further examination and questioning of what I wanted to achieve suggested that the problem could be approached more effectively if the teacher himself/herself was confronted instead. Reflection on the main disturbing areas discussed above, the center of attention shifted towards the teacher's lack of awareness of the issues and the problems stemming therefrom. Students' lack of learning, as it appeared now, was the product of the problem, not the problem itself. Staying with the question of the lack of learning in students would have left many essential questions unanswered. I now saw that the main problem was more likely to be a question of a lack of learning in teachers rather than in students.

I further questioned myself on the problem. Will teachers be able to see that there is a problem of student learning and more importantly, will they be able to act on it? Demonstrating the lack of student learning would not necessarily serve as an immediate invitation to search for a possible solution to the problem. Merely showing that student learning is ineffective does not offer a solution to that lack. It did not mean that action can and will be taken on the problem. It seemed more appropriate to shift to the question of teacher awareness. The lack of learning in teachers and the need to develop their awareness turned this into a teacher development problem. Making teachers aware of their own teaching and conscious of the problematic areas in their own practice, became more important than showing that one specific problem exists.

I finally decided that I wanted to go farther than merely to collect documentation on the problem; rather, I wanted to seek ways of motivating teachers into taking action towards solving the problem. The drawback however, was the limited scope of teachers' thinking. Teachers in Cyprus are not accustomed to reflecting on their teaching in a pedagogical manner. Once I confronted a colleague of mine with the following question: "Under what type of circumstances do your students learn best; what lessons do they enjoy most"? She was surprised at this question and she replied; "Oh, I never thought about that"!

I detected a lack of awareness on the part of the teacher about what was happening in her art room. Overall, teachers just do not consider as significant the activity that takes place in their art room. They are simply not encouraged to question their teaching through teacher development courses nor by contact with the inspectors. They merely evaluate the final product of student work without questioning the process nor any ancillary outcomes of the process i.e. student learning.

Thus the final definition of my research problem developed from a general feeling of uneasiness. It finally focused on the need for developing teachers.

Describing the Context

The following section seeks to clarify the issues by introducing the role of the art teacher in Cyprus, the structure of the art curriculum and the existing teacher development schemes. The discussion provides us with an understanding of why the proposed change is needed.

The role of the art teacher in the public schools of Cyprus

Art teachers in Cyprus are people who studied some form of art or received a degree, a diploma or a certificate in a discipline relating directly or indirectly to the fine arts. These disciplines vary widely from civil engineering to interior

decorating to designing costumes and stages for the theater (theatrical design). Having a certificate in education, is not a requirement for someone to be applying for a position in the teaching of art (nor in any other subject) in public schools. Moreover, a teacher who studied only one form of art (painting or sculpture or printing, or arts and crafts, or art history, etc.) is required to teach all of them, or at least the basic ones: painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, and art history, without necessarily possessing an adequate knowledge of them. Thus a very limited number of art teachers are experts in their trade.

A further limitation is that a large number of art teachers do not practice any type of art themselves; yet they are asked to evaluate student artistic work in their teaching practice. For example, a teacher who studied architectural or furniture design is required as part of his/her teaching, to evaluate paintings created by the students. This is highly irregular, since this teacher is not trained in what he/she is asked to evaluate in their students' work. The teachers do not realize their limitations and imposed theories inhibit any type of self-awareness to develop. As a result, students are taught a narrow and misinterpreted definition of art since an interior decorator will see art as merely decoration, a sculptor as form, an architectural designer as realistic and rigid forms of the world around us. As a consequence, teachers do not develop in students aesthetic values and a wide artistic awareness.

Adding to these problems is the difficult working schedule of art teachers. An art teacher teaches between twenty-four and twenty-eight periods a week. A teaching period consists of forty-five minutes. Each classroom contains thirty to thirty-five students. Many secondary schools do not even have an art room for the students to work in. The teaching of art takes place in their own regular classrooms. Resources and facilities are limited and of very poor quality. The teachers always run out of paper and paints before the school year is over. Printing presses and kilns for ceramics classes are not provided (indeed ceramics is not offered in the art curriculum). Such art rooms as exist are simply large rooms with long rectangular tables. No other special facilities are provided. It becomes difficult, almost impossible, to work with any materials other than paints, brushes, pencils, oil pastel and collage.

A more difficult aspect of teaching art in Cyprus is that art is not offered as an elective in the Cypriot educational system. In junior high school, all the students are required to take art. First and second-graders take art for ninety minutes a week (two teaching periods) while the third-graders spend only forty-five minutes in the art class (one teaching period). Not all the students who are required to take art in junior high school, however, exhibit an interest in the subject. On the contrary, a very limited number of students show some type of interest in art while the majority create disciplinary problems.

The fourth-graders in senior high school, (sixteen-year olds) are again required to take art for one teaching period a week. For the two upper grades of senior

high school, art is offered as an elective for two teaching periods a week. The problem in the upper grades of senior high school is that students are not encouraged by their advisors to take art as their elective because it does not offer any significant knowledge to be used later on in their studies abroad. Moreover, it is common knowledge that most art teachers teaching elective courses in senior high school are not highly qualified. Most students who elect art in the last two grades in senior high school, do so because they feel it is an easy subject and they will not have to work very hard to get a good grade.

Therefore, the art teachers' image emerging from the discussion is one of limited teachers within a limited teaching setting.

The structure of the art curriculum

The general structure of the curriculum is art-centered. This means that it is based clearly on criteria which apply more to professional artists rather than to students. A brief outline of what the curriculum covers is set out below. This outline applies to the art curricula of both elementary and secondary education.

- Art techniques: drawing, painting, printmaking, three-dimensional work or sculpture, mixed-media and art history.
- Art topics: still life, human figure, portrait, landscape, imaginative and abstract art.
- Artistic problems and objectives: understanding the artistic elements and principles. The artistic elements are: line, shape, color, texture, form and value. The artistic principles are: contrast, rhythm, balance, repetition, harmony. Also the development of aesthetic appreciation in students through the study of art history.

The curriculum does not offer detailed course descriptions for specific ages/grades. Nor does it offer any variety of course or scope for teacher selection or student choice.

The undifferentiated curriculum outline gives the teachers no suggestions about the proposed content for each year group nor does it indicate the intended progression through those years. This general approach to the art curriculum suggests a lack of concern about the needs of the students themselves due to its lack of consideration for the audience it seeks to address. There is no consideration for the pedagogical aspect of teaching art to children. This makes it difficult for students to comprehend and even achieve the objectives set by the curriculum, thus diminishing their interest. Moreover, there is no sense of continuity in learning. It limits the teachers in the way it offers selections of material to teach. The alternative to this could be to specify the subject matter for each grade or specify the progression in artistic development for each grade.

To illustrate the description and comments above, I set out below (Documents 1.1 and 1.2) sections taken from the art curricula of elementary, junior and senior high schools listing the objectives and evaluation criteria for painting. Presenting sections of the three curricula will facilitate the discussion in showing that there are:

- <u>similarities</u> in objectives in all three curricula; no recognition of children's age and
- <u>contradictions</u> within the same curriculum between objectives and evaluation criteria.

Document: 1.1 Painting - general objectives

Elementary School	Junior High School	Senior High School
The student is to enjoy color through a variety of experimental works.	The students are to paint a unified composition in which nature is interpreted as colored forms and not as colored drawings.	The students should be able to interpret the colors of a topic in values of only one color. This is called monochromatic painting.
The student is to discover his/her own way of expressing himself/herself through the use of color.	The students are to investigate thoroughly painting media and tools.	The students should be able to create similarities and contrasts between colors through simplification.
The student should be able to use color with ease.	The students try to express themselves in new ways.	The students should be able to use contrasts of warm and cool colors.
The student should be able to mix colors and to create a variety of color hues.	The students try to maintain their personality in their painting.	The students should be able to interpret a landscape though atmospheric colors.
The student should be able to paint the human form and objects.	Students learn to appreciate works of art aesthetically and accept painting as a very old form of expression.	

(translated from: a) the art curriculum of elementary education, 1990; b) the art curriculum for junior high school, 1973; and c)the art curriculum for senior high school - an elective course, (no date), Ministry of Education, Nicosia, Cyprus).

Document: 1.2 Painting - evaluation criteria

Elementary School	Junior High School	Senior High School
Is the student exhibiting interest in his/her works?	The student work needs to be exciting, fresh, interesting, unified, to posses rhythm and movement, to have lively, intense color relationships, unity in the composition, personal style, original solutions to the painting problem.	Students should achieve the objectives.
Is there a difference from previous works? (of the same student).	Is the work painterly?	Student work should exhibit a rich and sensitive use of media.
Is the student expressing himself/herself with ease?	Is the work complete with unified relationships of colors, shapes, lines?	Student work should exhibit unity.
Is the student using colors with ease?	Is there a conscious effort on the part of the student to show a variety of colors, shapes and textures?	Student work should exhibit originality and imagination with unusual harmonies and abstractions of natural forms.
	Is the student work rigid or does it exhibit flexibility?	Student work should exhibit a powerful effect.
		Student work should exhibit rhythm, clarity and expression.
		Student work should exhibit his/her personal style.

(translated from: a) the art curriculum of elementary education, 1990; b) the art curriculum for junior high school, 1973; and c) the art curriculum for senior high school - an elective course, (no date), Ministry of Education, Nicosia, Cyprus).

In Document 1.1 only the objectives for one particular area of the three curricula; painting, are given. There are similar ambitious lists of objectives for drawing, printmaking, mixed-media, sculpture and art history. It is impossible to achieve these within the limited time provided, by limited

teachers and limited facilities and therefore no art teacher ever tries to. Furthermore, the curricula does not specify for which children's audience these objectives are suitable and when these objectives should be reached.

The objectives given relating to the painting course in the three different curricula seem to be similar in what they ask of students to achieve. For example, both elementary and junior high school painting objectives ask the students to experiment with the media and to express themselves in a personal style. The objectives for junior high school students are relatively more difficult than the ones for the elective course for senior high school which should be a more demanding course. Moreover, the elementary painting course asks the students to be able to paint the human form and objects, which is a very difficult task for young children, while it asks the older students of senior high school to simply experiment with color problems.

Some concepts are too difficult to be understood by students of secondary education. The wording is difficult, ambiguous and misleading. The objectives in both the elementary and secondary painting course are quite difficult to be achieved by children of that age. Since the objectives are too sophisticated for both students and teachers to fully comprehend and too ambitious to be achieved within the time provided, then they are ignored by the art teachers. They merely seek to achieve a pretty result in student work through any means they can. Since the objectives cannot be considered then the process of learning is ignored as well. The product is more or less emphasized. This eliminates the concern for a progression in artistic development in the art curriculum.

In Document 1.2 the evaluation criteria appear not to be evaluating what is implied in the objectives. Perhaps they were designed as two separate entities. The development of a personal style; exhibiting in the work rhythm, clarity, expression, unity and originality in the elective (i.e. senior high school) art course are not specified as part of the objectives, and yet they are part of the evaluation criteria. The objectives merely include a set of exercises dealing with color problems: monochromatic painting, color simplification, contrasts between warm and cool colors and atmospheric colors. There is a definite gap indicated between what is given as objectives and what is evaluated in student learning at the end of the course.

Moreover, it seems that to meet the criteria presented in the evaluation above would require more time than is provided in the school schedule. This gap explains why art teachers do not work towards achieving specific objectives in their teaching through the art curriculum but rather organize their teaching around themes and artistic media. For example, for one semester the class might work on drawing the human form and a still life using oil pastels and the next semester move on to the human face and a landscape using the pencil. Art teachers merely organize a variety of unrelated activities for their students with no special concern for continuity in learning.

Most art teachers, let alone their students, find the evaluation criteria in all three curricula extremely difficult to understand. Since most art teachers are not qualified to teach art, are not trained in education, and do not exercise any form of art themselves, it becomes highly unlikely that they could deal effectively with the dual problem of first comprehending the artistic concepts themselves and second interpreting them into teaching material in order for their students to grasp them. The concepts of creating a unified whole, achieving clarity and expression, exhibiting rhythm and harmony in a work of art are highly sophisticated concepts which take years to master by a well-trained artist. A well-trained artist, however, who is a master of these concepts cannot transfer them to students successfully if he/she is not trained in pedagogical matters. An interpretation is needed for children.

Evaluation of student work does not follow these specific criteria. Good marks are simply given to students with nice, tidy and realistic work with a pretty effect. Even though abstracting realistic forms and using one's imagination are a big part of creating art, teachers prefer to remain within realistic work because they are not equipped to evaluate abstracted nor imaginative work by students.

Though not providing age-related course descriptions nor ones which exhibit development in artistic progression, the official documents do give some illustrative examples of lesson planning. Set out below are specific lessons taken from the existing curricula for elementary and secondary education: Document: 1.3 - Working with cloth; a lesson suggested for elementary students and Document: 1.4 - Drawing; a lesson suggested for senior high school students (elective course).

Document: 1.3 Working with cloth - elementary school

THEME: Working with cloth
GENERAL OBJECTIVES
-The child is to develop the capacity for using mixed media in a rich and sensitive way in order to express himself/herself through a specific theme.
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES / SKILLS
-To be able to compose shapes and colors.
-To develop the capacity of cutting, selecting, composing, and making a picture out of cloth.
MEDIA - MEANS - ACTIVITIES
-Creating the appropriate setting. Exhibiting previous student work on the same theme and copied works of various artists.
-A collection of materials in a variety of shapes (triangles, squares, rectangles, circles etc.).
- Paper, glue.
-The child experiments with the materials. Investigates the possibilities of the cloth. Tries shapes and colors.

- The child tries to make houses, boats, trees, figures with cloth.
- The child puts together works with themes.

EVALUATION

- Does the child explore the possibilities in the media to express himself/herself?
- Is he / she using the media in a sensitive way?
- Does the child feel joy and satisfaction?

(translated from the art curriculum for elementary education, 1990, Ministry of Education, Cyprus)

Many unanswered questions arise from this example: when is this particular lesson to be taught during the school year? Which age-group of students in elementary education is it referring to? For how long is it to be taught? What do students need to know before taking on this new experience with cloth; what did they do before this lesson, is this a follow-up or is it an isolated lesson; what if it is repeated by the art teacher next year; are the children going to keep doing this lesson all year around? Therefore, such examples are thus of little practical help to the teachers since it is not clear of how to relate it to their teaching schedule. The curriculum simply offers a set of unrelated activities.

The following document (1.4) illustrates the manner in which the policy document offers content as well as the teaching strategy for a drawing lesson in the elective course for senior high school.

Document: 1.4 Drawing - senior high school (elective)

UNIT: DRAWING

MEDIA: pencil, ink, charcoal sticks and pencils, paper of various qualities

THEMES: human figure, face, landscape, still life, composition

EXERCISES: (1 teaching period = 45 minutes)

1. Placing the theme on paper - 1 teaching period
2. Sensitive outlines - 1 teaching period
3. Character of the object - 1 teaching period
4. Movement (axles of the object) - 1 teaching period
5. Analyze the object in planes - 2 teaching periods
6. Values and chiaroscuro - 2 teaching periods
7. Space - 3 teaching periods
8. Proportions - 2 teaching periods
9. Detailed study - 3 teaching periods

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

To achieve sensitive placement.
To be aware of negative space.
To express light - shadow or texture through the outline of the object.
To be aware of the character of one shape as compared to another.
To use the axles of one object.
To analyze the theme in levels which posses shape, axles and movement.
To analyze the theme as values and chiaroscuro.

To use ways of creating space.
To teach students to look at the relationships between shapes.
To achieve a realistic reproduction.
EVALUATION:
Students drawings are evaluated as to the:
1. attainment of the specific objectives;
2. sensitive use of media;
3. sensitive presentation of the whole;
4. original solution to the problem;
5. powerful effect of the work;
6. attainment of rhythm and powerful expression;
7. development of the student's personal style.
(translated from the art curriculum for senior high school - an elective course, (no date), Ministry of Education, Nicosia, Cyprus).

Document 1.4, implies that a set of very rigid directions need to be followed by teachers. These predetermine what is supposed to happen in the classroom and how long it should take for students to comprehend each skill. But the objectives given are far too many and too ambitious to achieve within the limited time provided by a few lessons. Drawing is only a small section of the lessons suggested for the entire year. The objectives suggested would need a complete course on drawing spread two years. The evaluation criteria are again out of context, since time does not allow the student to achieve all these in his/her work nor does it consider students' level of interest and understanding. Therefore, according to this drawing lesson, the art teacher will be expected to evaluate in student work quality criteria that he/she has not actually taught them.

Some general questions arise from the curricula critique above:

- what is communicated through the structure of the curricula?
- for which teaching context?
- what is taken-for-granted through the curricula?

It would appear that the art curricula are not geared towards the real needs of students and teachers nor the context in which they will be implemented. The art curricula are not in any sense student-centered. They take for granted the limited teachers.

The ineffectiveness of the art curricula has been discussed here to serve three purposes. The first one is the purpose of setting the context of art teaching in Cyprus; second is to raise certain issues relating to change; and the third is to set the scene for an exploration of the theme of teacher development.

Current teacher development schemes

The existing teacher development schemes for teachers in Cyprus consist of seminars and workshops which originate either at the Pedagogical Institute of the Ministry of Education, or with the inspectors, or within schools during staff meetings. It also includes short courses abroad. The table below seeks to summarize the sources, types, objectives and duration of each scheme followed by discussion with brief documentation.

Table: 1.1 Teacher development schemes in Cyprus

SOURCES	TYPES	OBJECTIVES	DURATION
1. Pedagogical Institute	a)Compulsory courses	To upgrade newly-appointed teachers	62 sessions, meeting twice a week for one year
	b)Voluntary seminars and workshops	To offer knowledge and skills on the subject matter	3 - 4 days for 2 hours and 45 minutes each day
2. Inspectors	a)Compulsory seminars	Introduction of year's objectives.	One meeting in September for two hours.
	b)Voluntary Workshops	To offer teaching strategies on the subject matter	3-4 days for 2 hours and 45 minutes each day
3. School's staff meetings.	Directives given to staff members.	Teaching improvement	Meeting once a month for an hour and a half.
4. Short courses abroad (not frequent)	Lectures, workshops and visits to experimental schools	Informing of new developments in education.	Up to four weeks.

1.a) The Pedagogical Institute of the Ministry of Education is responsible for the major in-service training courses for teachers in Cyprus. Since teachers are not required to have a certificate in education in order to be appointed to teaching positions, the compulsory course designed by policy-makers at the Institute aims at bridging the gap. Those responsible for teaching the course, however, are simply teachers with no higher qualifications such as graduate degrees or experience in educational research. They are simply teachers with seniority. They teach theoretical courses containing material as specified by the permanent staff of the Pedagogical Institute which consists of a limited number of people appointed to the Institute many years ago. These

people have been away from classroom teaching for a long period of time and therefore possess no up-to-date knowledge of classroom problems.

Document: 1.5, is a translation of parts of a questionnaire (three questions taken from pages five, six and seven) which was designed by the department of research and assessment of the Pedagogical Institute in 1996. It was sent out to a sample of randomly-chosen teachers who took the one-year compulsory in-service training course. The document in question consists of seven pages and teachers are asked to offer responses to sixteen questions relating to the benefits they gained as a result of completing the course as well as suggestions as to its improvement. The questions translated below are representative of the type of questioning used.

Document: 1.5 Pedagogical Institute's evaluation questionnaire

1. The topics taught at the Pedagogical Institute during the in-service training course are given in the table below. State what should be done for each by putting an x in the appropriate box.

1.	To be abolished	**3.**	To increase the practical part
2.	To increase the theoretical part	**4.**	To remain as is

	TOPIC	1	2	3	4
1.	Principles and aims of education				
2.	Psychology of learning and principles of teaching				
3.	Teaching as mutual understanding				
4.	Criteria of effective teaching				
5.	Computers in your subject and other subjects				
6.	Lesson planning				
7.	Teaching methodologies - Current perspectives				
8.	Learning to do research				
9.	Evaluation - testing				
10.	Technology in education - Visual aids				
11.	Classroom management				
12.	Experimental teaching				
13.	Problem-solving				
14.	Teaching through discovery				
15.	Collaborative learning				
16.	Adolescent Psychology				
17.	Socialization of Adolescents				
18.	Problems in learning and ways to confront them				
19.	Effective questioning				
20.	The teacher as a program developer				
21.	Group dynamics				
22.	Educational systems				

23.	Teaching concepts				
24.	Applying school subjects in every-day life				
25.	Creating relationships between school subjects				
26.	Writing a research paper				
27.	Presenting a research paper				
28.	Learning to do projects				

2. State to what degree you wish the following to occur during your training at the Pedagogical Institute:

1 = I absolutely disagree	2 = I disagree
3 = I have no views on the matter	4 = I agree
5 = I absolutely agree	

4.13	To observe teaching by colleagues of various disciplines	1 2 3 4 5
4.14	To observe teaching by other teachers at your school	1 2 3 4 5
4.15	To observe teaching by the Pedagogical Institute's staff members at your school	1 2 3 4 5
4.16	To observe teaching by the inspectors at your school	1 2 3 4 5

3. Evaluate to what extent the following factors helped in the development of your own personal teaching style.

1 = very low degree	2 = low degree	3 = satisfactory degree
4 = high degree	5 = very high degree	

5.1	Inspectors	1 2 3 4 5
5.2	The headmasters at the various schools I taught	1 2 3 4 5
5.3	Coordinators of my school subject	1 2 3 4 5
5.4	Colleagues of my subject	1 2 3 4 5
5.5	Colleagues of other subjects	1 2 3 4 5
5.6	The course offered at the Pedagogical Institute	1 2 3 4 5
5.7	Other seminars offered by the Pedagogical Institute	1 2 3 4 5
5.8	Personal study and experience	1 2 3 4 5

(translated from the questionnaire issued by the department of research and assessment of the Pedagogical Institute, 1996, Ministry of Education, Cyprus).

The sixteen questions in the questionnaire are distributed in four categories. The main category deals with asking the teachers to fit their way of working in the classroom into the established teaching methodologies taught (the word taught is used in the questionnaire) during the course. These are: lecturing in class, teaching towards discovery in learning, discussion (dialogue with students), and experimental teaching. Also how often do they use visual aids, assign projects, use written lesson plans, give student work-sheets, and how often

teachers use certain types of testing: subjective tests, objective tests, or a combination of both.

The second category seeks teachers' opinions with regard to the theoretical and practical aspects relating to the twenty-eight topics taught at the course and whether more sessions will be needed in the future. The twenty-eight topics taught during the course, as listed in the first question above, are to be discussed in sixty-two sessions. Sixty-two sessions do not seem to be sufficient to cover that many important issues.

The third category refers to observed teaching as a way of improving one's teaching practice. This is a main procedure for in-service training courses to help teachers develop. The choices given (in the second question above) refer to observing teaching of other colleagues as well as by inspectors and Pedagogical Institute representatives. It is worth mentioning that the teachers whose teaching is to be observed are well chosen by the Pedagogical Institute officials. They feel that these are good teachers and others will benefit by watching them teach. The objective on observed teaching, as it is used in the course, is not for teachers to exercise reflective thinking by making critical comments, but rather to be offered a formula of effective teaching.

The fourth category, relating to the third question above, refers to the teachers' personal teaching style and how they acquired it. Again, in the choices given (inspectors, head masters, coordinators, Pedagogical Institute seminars, colleagues and personal study and experience) officials of the ministry take precedence.

Based on topics the questionnaire seeks to evaluate, certain outcomes emerge. It seems that the course is theoretically biased since the emphasis is on distinguishing established teaching strategies. It does not evaluate teachers' professional issues but rather how well they remember and how often they use established teaching procedures they were taught at the course. It does not refer to improvement of teaching or how all these can solve problems in teaching. It asks that the general theory be applied to teachers' way of teaching instead of trying to solve unique problems through what they learned at the course. This seems to exhibit the general approach of the course since it ignores the unique character of classroom problems. No reference is made to the teacher's or to the students' needs.

The teachers are not asked to comment on their own teaching. This ignores the significance of the teacher experiencing himself/herself since the emphasis is on observing others not on personal experience. Moreover, it emphasizes the influence of outsiders on the teachers' personal teaching style. Inspectors and officials of the Pedagogical Institute are a major part of the choices given. This question ignores the context since a personal teaching style is not approved by the inspectors.

A further criticism seems to be that the language used focuses mainly on the vocabulary of theoretical educational rhetoric. Moreover, it does not specify how the outcomes of the research will be used; how it will feedback into the system and whose criteria of value are being applied: the teachers who took the course, or the researchers. It is not clear how or whether the information gathered will be used.

1.b) Workshops 1 and 2 set out below, illustrate the type of voluntary art workshops designed by the Pedagogical Institute.

Workshop 1: Technical drawing for art teachers

Duration: 4 days for 2 hours and 45 minutes
Content: The workshop includes theory and practical work.
- Introduction to technical drawing
- Exercises
- Teaching strategies (methodological procedures)
- Designing lesson plans

(translated from the booklet of the Pedagogical Institute on teacher development workshops for secondary and technical education, 1993, Nicosia)

Workshop 2: Technical and realistic drawing

Duration: 4 days for 2 hours and 45 minutes each day.
Content: The workshop includes theory and practical work.
-Suggestions by the inspector on the relationships between technical drawing and realistic drawing.
-Teaching strategies offered by inspector or a Pedagogical Institute staff member.
-The participants will design a lesson plan and present it to the other participants. The inspector will evaluate their lesson plans.
(translated from the booklet of the Pedagogical Institute on teacher development workshops for secondary and technical education, 1995, Nicosia)

My criticism of these type of workshops is that they concentrate on matters which are not part of art education. The topic of technical drawing is part of the curriculum of design and technology not art. Despite this, art inspectors made it part of art teaching for the sake of creating more teaching hours for their own teachers in senior high school. Technical drawing is offered as an elective in the two upper grades of senior high school. This though, seems to take precedence over their main, and more difficult objective which is the creative teaching of art concepts to school children. Technical drawing is architectural drawing which follows formulas, and yet most of the workshops offered by the Institute the last eight years center on this subject. This reflects the weakness of the Pedagogical Institute's art representative (the person who is attached there for the subject of art who is simply an art teacher with seniority) and the art inspector to recognize the priorities of art in schools.

2.a) The character of the art inspector's compulsory seminars will now be indicated through a description of two seminars which took place in September in two different school years: 1991-92 and 1992-93. The topics are raised and presented exclusively by the art inspector. Their aim is to introduce to the teachers the year's objectives as specified by the Ministry of Education as well as any other issues the inspector would like to introduce as her objectives for art teaching. Notices informing the teachers of the place and time of the seminars are sent out to all schools in Cyprus early in September.

School year: September, 1991-92, place: students' art center, time: 2:00-4:00.
The inspector began by passing out sheets of paper with written information without informing the participants about the content. The paper had written on it five factors to consider (based on inspector's suggestion) as criteria for evaluating student work. The relative importance of each in determining the final grade:

1. completion of the work	50%	2. Composition of the work	20%
3. Originality of the work	10%	4. Sensitivity in the use of media	10%
5. Color combinations	10%		

The introduction by the inspector seemed somewhat abrupt. It took the participants completely by surprise. They were unprepared to discuss the issue. Evaluation criteria for student work had never before been introduced as a serious issue for discussion at an art seminar. This created confusion among the participants who reacted in an aggressive manner refusing to discuss the inspector's five criteria for evaluating student work. Their main argument was that completion of the work as a factor in grading the work is valued very highly at 50% of the total grade since they learned from their teaching experience that not all students work at the same pace.

If a student wishes to put more quality into his/her work, it might take longer to finish. That does not mean that this student will be given a lower grade simply because he/she is aiming for a higher standard. A teacher commented that she graded a student's unfinished work with an A because she felt that the work, even though it was unfinished, nevertheless, possessed great artistic potential for a student of that age. Another teacher commented that there is no point in discussing the issue further since most of the art teachers feel that composition is the major factor in student artwork and not its completion. The majority of teachers felt that students should be graded mainly on their imagination and effort rather than completion of work. The overall atmosphere of this annual seminar was thus tense and unfriendly.

School year: September, 1992-93, place: students' art center, time: 2:00-4:00.
Issues were again initiated by the inspector. The participants were not acquainted with the issues beforehand. The inspector initiated the talk and

introduced the issues one by one. Four items were introduced in a two-hour monologue by the inspector. A new art history book was introduced by the inspector. The teachers were told that all the students in the first grade of junior high school would be given one and the art teachers should use it as part of their teaching. No implementation strategy was offered however and no discussion was allowed on the issue of introducing a new book in one's teaching.

Another issue relating to the talented student in art, was introduced through an American survey which the inspector copied for each of the teachers. The survey being in English was not understood by most of the participants. Moreover the survey was outdated and based on data from American schools. The participants were asked to respond to the question of "who do you consider to be the talented student in your art classes"? Only three participants (out of 35-40 participants) offered responses. Two of them were immature since they limited their definition of the talented student to the one who can copy realistically from nature. The other response which included the qualities of creativity, originality and independence in its definition was not allowed by the inspector to elaborate on her definition and simply moved on to another issue. When the inspector was asked by the art teachers to offer reasons for raising this particular issue for discussion, she simply replied that the discussion had really no essential purpose; simply an issue for the teachers to think about.

2.b) The inspector in cooperation with the Pedagogical Institute is permitted to plan workshops for art teachers on a voluntary basis. These are advertised in a booklet (relating to all school subjects) and sent out to schools in early September. Due to its voluntary status, however, only six or seven teachers attend; sometimes even less or none. Most often the workshops are canceled due to lack of teacher attendance. In reference to this type of workshops the Pedagogical Institute staff members always complain that teachers are not attending these activities and inspectors complain that what they give to teachers who attend the workshops is not reflected in their classroom teaching. The lack of teachers' interest in attending these types of workshops, however, was never investigated by the inspectors. It was simply blamed on teachers' lack of interest.

It is possible that teachers' negative response to the art workshops is due to the purely artistic nature of the content. This means that the teachers are merely to observe a new way of teaching color or composition or a new art technique such as printmaking and sculpture. The task of translating what is learned at the workshops into student-learning material is never an issue for discussion. The skills gained at these workshops are always applicable to adult artists and not to students of secondary education who share no particular interest in art.

3. The third form of teacher development strategy identified in Table: 1.1 is the introduction of pedagogical matters by the head master/mistress, during staff meetings, where other school business is discussed as well. At one such meeting, the suggestions were copied by the head-mistress from books on the philosophy of education and handed-out to the teachers. These included: "the principles of good teaching"; "how to achieve discipline in the classroom"; "the teacher and his/her responsibilities towards his/her students" and "teacher self-evaluation". The papers were given at four different staff meetings. A translation of part of the paper on good (the word good was used) teaching is set out below (Document: 1.6). This included twenty-six principles. They were to be read by teachers so they could presumably become good teachers.

Document: 1.6 Principles of good teaching

The teacher:
1. does not acquire knowledge from the course book he/she teaches from;
2. acquires knowledge as well from other scientific writings;
3. designs a plan as to what he/she will teach and how;
4. motivates student interest;
5. motivates active involvement of students;
6. emphasizes the main points distinguishing them from secondary points of importance;
7. helps students understand with the appropriate questioning;
8. uses the blackboard effectively;
9. uses visual aids during teaching;
10. promotes at normal pace what needs to be covered;
11. prepares and checks students' home-work;
12. communicates properly with the students, creating favorable conditions for learning;
13. encourages students to ask questions;
14. tries not to use the monologue in his/her teaching.

The list included a total of twenty-six items. The information was simply given to the teachers as formulas for success to be followed in order to become good teachers. The head-mistress asked whether any of the teachers had any questions and simply moved on to other school matters because there was limited time. The handing-out of written information copied from educational books without any further discussion or teacher involvement is a customary procedure in efforts to promote teacher development. In the case described above, the entire procedure of the pedagogical moment took only fifteen minutes; just enough time to hand out the papers. The teachers obviously exhibited no particular interest in the paper and simply cast it aside and moved on to another item of school business.

4. A fourth strategy in developing teachers is sending them on short courses abroad. These are used for a very limited number of people who are attached

to various services of the Ministry of Education, such as the Curriculum Development center and the Pedagogical Institute. Again, the problem with these courses is that what is gained abroad, is not made applicable to the Cypriot scene, thus rendering this new knowledge inadequate to teachers.

On the basis of the descriptions of the different forms of planned training activities set out above, it is possible to formulate a set of assumptions which appear to inform teacher development in Cyprus. These are:

- teachers will talk willingly at the seminars and offer their opinions freely on issues discussed;
- teachers will exhibit interest and enthusiasm for innovative ideas introduced by seminar lecturers;
- teachers will accept and adopt what is said at the seminars without reservations;
- they will automatically change their ways and improve their teaching;
- schemes can safely ignore the Cypriot educational context;
- there is no serious lack of communication between the teachers and the system;
- only inspectors and officials of the Pedagogical Institute are experts in offering issues for discussion and possess formulas for successful teaching;
- becoming a good teacher means listening to others, observing others, reading and following a set of rules on how to be a good teacher with no need for interaction and participation;
- teachers' practical experience and views on the issues are of no practical relevance.

These assumptions may seem bleak and even naive, but I shall seek to demonstrate their reality by exploring modes of teacher development based on different premises. As it is, the practitioners leave seminars and workshops with a set of unanswered questions:

- What am I supposed to know from the course, seminar/workshop?
- How am I supposed to implement it?
- How do I monitor my actions?
- Who will tell me whether or not things are going in the right direction?
- Why do my own views not matter?
- What about my practical experience? Does it matter at all?

These questions create unfavorable conditions for teacher growth and learning and make it extremely difficult for any knowledge gained at the seminars to be fed back into the improvement of teaching.

The Purpose: Research Questions

The description of the problematic areas in the educational setting in Cyprus clearly supports the notion that there is a stalemate in the area of teacher improvement. The current teacher development scheme, the art curriculum and art teacher role described above, seem to suggest a lack in both active teacher participation and a serious consideration of their real problems.

Even if the teachers manage to reach some form of implementation on a policy, many questions still remain unanswered: is this right; how do I know it is right; who will tell me whether this is right; why should I keep on doing it; who will check and see whether I am implementing this? In short, there is no accountability and therefore no coordinated progress.

My intention in this thesis was therefore to shift the emphasis from the development of policy and the disappointing progress in implementing those policies, whether good or bad, to the development of the teacher. For it appears that it is the failure to engage the teacher in meaningful curriculum development which is the central problem within the Cypriot educational system.

These concerns resolve themselves into a series of research questions which are set out below and which inform and control the shape of the discussion which follows.

- What is the nature of teacher development?
- How can teacher development be supported (especially in the case of art teachers in Cyprus)?
- What is the relationship between teacher development and curriculum development (especially in relation to the art curriculum in Cyprus)?

These issues are the main focus of this thesis.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to describe the problematic areas of teacher development, art curriculum and the role of the art teacher focusing in on a main area of investigation and formulating a set of research questions to guide the investigation. Many questions needed to be answered at this stage. Since the main issues involved in the thesis were teacher development, its link to curriculum development and their relationship to effective management of change, an investigation on recent thinking of these issues and interrelated ones was proposed. The following chapter seeks to explore teacher development and its link to curriculum development from a variety of perspectives.

Chapter: **2**

Investigating Perspectives on Teacher Development, Investigating Curriculum with regard to Teacher Development

Many questions needed to be answered at this stage. Since the main issues involved in the thesis were teacher development, its link to curriculum development and their relationship to effective management of change, an investigation on recent thinking of these issues was proposed.

Investigating Perspectives on Teacher Development

In light of the earlier commentary on the limitations of existing teacher development schemes in Cyprus, I begin by reviewing recent thinking about the nature of teacher development and the means by which it can be supported. This will be done by way of exploring traditional as well as alternative approaches to teacher development.

Traditional approaches to teacher development

Hargreaves and Fullan, eds. (1992) refer to the traditional form of teacher development as "knowledge and skills-based" teacher development. They point out that this approach is the prominent one in schools today because it is practical, "clearly focused, easily organized and packaged, and relatively self-contained", (p. 3) takes less time and it is not messy. Despite its popularity, however, the skills-based method is highly criticized because many believe that instead of solving problems, it creates them.

They offer a critique of "skills-based" teacher development procedures by arguing that they "....are usually imposed on teachers on a top-down basis by 'experts' from outside their own schools" (p. 3). Programs based on knowledge and skills, "...fail to involve the teacher, and therefore run the risk of not securing their commitment and generating teacher resistance" (p. 3). Teachers' lack of initiative and control over the development process tends to inhibit their willingness to learn. Teachers' practical knowledge is not considered in the development of classroom skills.

Hargreaves and Fullan argue that an overconfidence in educational research findings of skills-based training creates problems in that it uses data irrelevant to teachers. A skills-based approach is imposed on teachers rather than developed with them. The skills acquired by teachers at the seminars are irrelevant to their needs as people, to their professional objectives and to their particular classroom setting. Thus when teaching strategies and new knowledge are im-

posed on teachers by outsiders, it is unlikely to lead to school improvement through teacher improvement.

Moreover, "...failure generally occurs because the programs are typically carried out by distant rationalists well removed from classroom activity. What has also become abundantly clear is the importance of teachers being actively engaged in the process and the need for them to gain control and power over the projects that they are to implement. But such teacher control, or ownership, has not been easy to generate. To do so requires new perspectives on staff development" (Wideen in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987, p. 2).

Kemmis (in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987) refers to teachers' lack of involvement through the traditional procedures as critics of their own working settings which would allow them to improve on and restructure their workplace. "The establishment of critical communities thus runs directly counter to the ideas of staff development and school improvement which express a bureaucratic ideology..." (p. 81).

"Seldom are teachers involved in decisions about the content and structure of the workshops they have to attend. They are expected to change their practices after only brief demonstrations of what is required, with few opportunities to compare their ideas with other teachers, and little substantial follow-up. Scant consideration is given to how teachers' work circumstances help or hinder the complex process of altering what they do". (Thiessen, in Hargreaves and Fullan, eds., 1992, p. 85).

Thiessen presents a list of assumptions regarding the teacher's role which he argues, underpin many traditional approaches to teacher development.

"Among the most prominent of these assumptions are that teachers are:

- not learners in their own classrooms;
- incapable of determining what and how they should develop;
- in need of special training only available through organized sessions outside the workplace;
- responsive to changes which are broken down into easily applied steps, and work efficiently and immediately;
- best served with instruction that requires initiation into something new, uncomplicated procedures, and immediate reinforcement and reward"

(ibid., p. 91).

Fullan (1991) gives reasons for failure of much of in-service education, which are relevant to the problems of teacher development in Cyprus.

1. "One-shot workshops are widespread but are ineffective.
2. Topics are frequently selected by people other than those for whom the in-service is intended.

3. Follow-up support for ideas and practices introduced in in-service programs occurs in only a very small minority of cases.
4. Follow-up evaluation occurs infrequently.
5. In-service programs rarely address individual needs and concerns.
6. The majority of programs involve teachers from many different schools and/or school districts, but there is no recognition of the differential impact of positive and negative factors within the systems to which they must return.
7. There is a profound lack of any conceptual basis in the planning and implementing of in-service programs that would ensure their effectiveness (Fullan, 1979, p.3)" (quoted on p. 316).

Rudduck (1991) suggests that teacher development procedures need to support the uniqueness of the participants' teaching settings. Referring to the one-day INSET sessions, she writes: "The problem is, therefore, to harness the potential of the conference in the everyday professional worlds of the people who attend. The conference is like a cultural island; it is often far removed, geographically and stylistically, from the mainland habitats of the conference members, and thought has to be given to the ways in which the experience of the cultural island of the conference can feed the activity of the mainland habitat, the classroom" (p. 80).

The views offered by Rudduck and Fullan emphasize the principle of uniqueness in the teacher's workplace or teaching context when attempting to develop teachers. Issues discussed must relate to that unique character.

Another important issue concerns the inadequacy of traditional approaches to abolish strong elements which are obstacles to teacher growth.

"Authority, management and history are formidable forces to overcome in the pursuit of change, learning and participation.

Our argument is that staff development is severely circumscribed by such an intimidating array of forces. Traditional approaches are inadequate to dislodge them, instead pre-service and in-service programs generally play a dutiful role in their maintenance" (Gibbons and Norman in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987, p. 103).

Lieberman, ed. (1988) makes the case for building a professional culture in schools in order for any improvements to take place. Teachers are simply not valued as professionals being told what to do at every step of the way. She argues for the need to restructure schools by building professional cultures of teachers instead of merely designing more workshops and courses for developing them.

The authors, whose views has been discussed above, suggest the need for alternative approaches to teacher development by way of arguing the inade-

quacy of traditional approaches. The main factors highlighted to support this argument are:

1. programs are designed by outsiders who are not acquainted with classroom activity;
2. teachers are not involved in any decision-making regarding their development;
3. teacher development programs are most often imposed and top-down;
4. the teachers are not perceived as professionals and the value of their practical knowledge is not considered in their development;
5. time is never given to teachers to understand new ideas; support and follow-ups are never offered;
6. experts on educational research and their outcomes are more valued than the teachers' perceptions of their practical work;
7. information offered at seminars does not accommodate the uniqueness of each school or classroom.

Overall, it is argued that traditional teacher development is "de-skilling" (Apple and Jungck, in Hargreaves and Fullan, eds., 1992) teachers instead of developing them and empowering them. "As employees lose control over their own labour, the skills that they have developed over the years atrophy" (p. 22). Apple and Junk perceive teaching as a labour process. Their argument is relevant, because teachers are not allowed to grow through the development of their own abilities in order to bring about improvement in classrooms and schools.

In the critiques of teacher development discussed so far in this section, certain terms occur frequently all of which are indicating harmful characteristics in current INSET practices. The terms 'outsider', 'expert in educational research', 'imposed', 'top-down' seem to take precedence over terms such as, the 'teacher', the 'professional', the 'classroom work', 'the student'.

Recognizing the need to search beyond traditional forms of teacher development, I turn now to alternative ideas which are centered on teachers and their needs. These alternatives suggest that neglected terms such as teacher, professional, classroom work, and student should be considered in programs regarding teachers and their development.

Alternative approaches to teacher development

Through the perspectives of various educators, on alternative approaches, four main themes emerge in regard to the nature of teacher development as it relates to the teacher and his/her work which examine some deeper aspects of teachers and their development: teacher empowerment; supporting teachers through the development process; teacher development and the process of change; sustaining teacher development. These are explored below:

teacher empowerment: The teachers' direct involvement in their development is argued as an essential factor in empowering self-motivated improvement. In this non-traditional approach to professional development, the teacher is given an image of a researcher critically reflecting on his/her classroom practice, improving his/her practice through a self-directed, self-motivated development.

Development through empowerment is referred to in various ways by different writers: a) teacher-researcher, b) critical reflector; c) self-directed teacher development through self-understanding, d) classroom-based teacher development.

a) "In short, the outstanding characteristics of the extended professional is a capacity for autonomous professional self-development through systematic self-study, through the study of the work of other teachers and through the testing of ideas by classroom research procedures" (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 144).

Hopkins (in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987), comments that "...as a concept teacher research embodies features that value responsibility, critical reflection, and the exercise of professional judgment. These characteristics reflect on the individual teacher's ability to be, in Stenhouse's phrase, 'autonomous in professional judgment'. In this scenario, a major factor becomes the teacher's ability to theorize about practice and to think systematically about what he or she is doing. Central to this activity is the self-conscious reflection upon classroom experience, to understand it and to create meaning out of that understanding" (p. 112).

Schon's reference to the crisis of professional knowledge is relevant to this discussion of teacher as researcher. He argues that such knowledge has become inadequate to meet the needs of the professions in the modern world. When problems fall outside ordinary expectations, ordinary professional knowledge is not adequate. One must seek ways to find new methods. One must seek to understand a problematic situation before making value judgments. "An artful teacher sees a child's difficulty in learning to read not as a defect in the child but as a defect "of his own instruction." So he must find a way of explaining what is bothering the pupil. He must do a piece of experimental research, then and there, in the classroom... He must be ready to invent new methods..." (Schon, 1983, p. 66). In order to invent new methods, however, the need arises to shift from "technical rationality" to "reflection-in-action". "When someone reflects-in-action, he becomes a researcher in the practice context. He is not dependent on the categories of established theory and technique, but constructs a new theory of the unique case" (Schon, 1983, p. 68).

Through the teacher-as-researcher perspective, emphasis is placed on understanding what is going on in the teacher's particular practice. This aims at uncovering the problems directly in the workplace and what is causing them

through experimental work in order to solve them. The act of looking into the work setting and trying to understand classroom experiences allows the teacher to use his/her professional judgment and develop awareness of what he/she is involved in.

"It is the liberation of teachers from a system of education that denies individual dignity by returning to them some degree of self-worth through the exercise of professional judgment" (Hopkins in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987, p. 113). With this approach the teacher's perceptions of his/her classroom become central to the enterprise while the traditional approach ignores teachers' perceptions and simply refers practitioners to theories for solving problems.

Stenhouse's, Hopkins' and Schon's arguments attach importance to three themes: the activity within the workplace; teacher's perceptions of that activity; and the use of professional judgment which gives value and respect to the teacher as a professional.

b) Kemmis (in Wideen and Andrews, eds. 1987) advocates critical reflection as the basis of teacher development and school improvement; "...the staff of a school must establish itself as a critical community of enquirers into the school's educational program. And also requires that staff adopt a critical and reflective stance on their own understanding of their work, their practices and their working situation.

Critical reflection is not only practitioner enquiry into practitioners' practices; it involves a form of critique which is also capable of analyzing and challenging the institutional structures in which practitioners work" (p. 75).

"A central aspect of critical reflection in education is always to examine the extent to which educational institutions sustain, and the extent to which they make vulnerable, the educational values and traditions they are intended to serve" (ibid., p. 79).

Kemmis' arguments have implications on the work of teachers and schools. His perspective adds a new dimension to the meaning of teacher development by linking teachers' development to their capacity to judge educational values and work towards achieving them; not merely in their classrooms but in their schools as well. This perspective reaches beyond the traditional training of teachers in technical skills. His views, however, imply a function of critical reflection by teachers on a much wider scale which reaches beyond the improvement of personal teaching practice.

c) Other writers attach importance to the notion of self-directed development. Clark has written: "My simple message has three parts: (1) there is much more to teaching than meets the eye; (2) the enriched image of teachers as reflective professionals is a good place to start in rethinking professional development; and (3) experienced teachers can become designers of their own personal pro-

grammes of self-directed professional development" (Clark in Hargreaves and Fullan, eds., 1992, p. 75).

Clark asks of how professional development programs can be improved on. "The answer is deceptively simple: we must give the responsibility for professional development to teachers themselves" (p. 77). This is his interpretation of self-directed professional development. Clark feels that "....adult development is voluntary - no one can force a person to learn, change or grow. When adults feel that they are in control of a process of change that they have voluntarily chosen, they are much more likely to realize full value from it than when coerced into training situations in which they have little say about the timing, the process or the goals" (ibid., p. 77). Clark goes on to comment that due to the unique character of each teacher, it is impossible to design a teacher development program to accommodate this uniqueness.

Clark, presents a set of principles for a self-directed professional development which urge the teachers to wake up to their own beliefs and make them explicit; to select teacher development approaches which help them show-off their strengths or good points; to ask inquiring questions about the everyday events in their classrooms; to ask for support and to make public to their colleagues the progress of their self-directed development. "What a teacher knows and believes about teaching, about learning, about curriculum, and about herself and her students are quite important to professional development" (ibid., p. 78).

d) "Classroom-based teacher development (CBTD) is an orientation which situates the professional growth of teachers within the daily realities of classroom life" (Thiessen, in Hargreaves and Fullan, eds., 1992, p. 85). "In response to the often imperceptible erosion of teachers' influence on their own development, I propose classroom-based teacher development (CBTD) as an alternative approach. CBTD is an orientation which both reconceptualizes how teachers improve their professional effectiveness in the work place and builds on the relationships that matter most to teachers in their development: their relationships with their students" (ibid., p. 86).

Thiessen offered criticisms on traditional approaches of teacher development in the previous section. Here he offers a contrast with an alternative which he explains above. "By contrast, the conditions of CBTD recognize that teachers are co-learners in their own classrooms. In CBTD, teachers root their development in the classroom. They pursue changes which are practical but which also have personal, educational and social priority. And they participate in reflective and collaborative experiences which ultimately empower and transform how teachers and students interact" (ibid., p. 91).

Doyle (in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987) suggests that ",....teachers' understandings are shaped in fundamental ways by the tasks they encounter in classrooms and the habitual ways they have gone about trying to accomplish these

tasks. Insights into teachers' cognitions can be gained, therefore, by understanding the tasks posed by classroom environments. It follows, then, that effective staff development must be based on a consideration of teachers' work in classrooms and the ways in which they understand that work" (p. 49).

Classroom-based teacher development perceives the teacher's development from the realistic view of his/her workplace. This approach considers the importance of the workplace as a source of learning and as the place to build better student-teacher relationships. The students take on significance as co-learners and partners in the improvement of classroom teaching. The improvements are practical and relate directly to the unique problems of the classroom.

Traditional approaches, on the other hand, seek to develop teachers by taking them away from their classrooms and proposing issues that are irrelevant to their working situations, while simultaneously ignoring feedback from students. This approach avoids the uniqueness of each situation and the views of the people involved in that situation; students and teachers.

Thus Hopkins, Schon, Kemmis, Clark, Doyle and Thiessen all make the case for teacher development as the development of the capacity to change existing limited working settings by developing new structures for classrooms and schools, inventing new methods to deal with unusual problems, and creating better relationships with students. The classroom is emphasized as the teacher's best learning environment. The teacher learns how to improve teaching within his/her workplace not away from it.

Supporting teachers through the development process: Despite the arguments offered above that teachers should be directly involved in their development through research, critical reflection and self-directed development, many writers nevertheless argue the case for on-going support.

Rudduck (in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987) suggests that the purpose of this support is to help experienced teachers to "bring back freshness of vision" (p. 130) to routine classroom teaching. She offers a stimulating definition of professional development which raises issues reaching beyond what could possibly be offered in one-day seminars. "Professional development is about the capacity of a teacher to remain curious about the classroom; to identify significant concerns in the process of teaching and learning; to value and seek dialogue with experienced colleagues as support in the analysis of data; and to adjust patterns of classroom action in the light of new understandings" (ibid., p. 129).

Rudduck proposes that an outsider as partner can help experienced teachers to see beyond the routine of every-day teaching practice and "to loosen the hold of habit" (p. 130). "Immersion in the world of routine practice can tend over time to reduce the capacity of the practitioner both to contemplate alter-

native courses of action and to continue to gain insight from everyday events. As insight goes, so some of the intellectual excitement of teaching goes too.....Thus, partnership supervision helps experienced teachers to achieve a new understanding of everyday classroom events and interactions" (p. 130).

Rudduck argues for the importance of developing an awareness on classroom activity from a fresh perspective in order to improve it. She emphasizes the importance of support in helping teachers to develop this awareness.

teacher development and the process of change: Issues of change and innovation appear to be closely related to teacher development. Improvement and change seem to be associated with teachers' willingness to try new ideas. Teachers, however, are not always willing to become involved in innovative ideas unless the appropriate conditions exist for them. This section deals briefly with arguments about motivating teachers to change.

"The majority of staff development experiences do not work because they fail to incorporate the characteristics of effective change processes. The bottom line is one of change, development, improvement. Staff and professional development *is* change - in learning materials, in skills and practices, in thinking and understandings.... There is no single strategy that can contribute more to meaning and improvement than on-going professional development. Successful staff development..., like successful change, requires great skill, sophistication, and persistence of effort" (Fullan, 1991, p. 318).

Fullan quotes Stallings who argues "that teachers are more likely to change their behavior and continue to use new ideas under the following conditions:" (quoted in Fullan 1991, p. 319). Teachers need to feel the need for change; what they learn at workshops must be adapted to their classroom teaching; when they try something new, an evaluation of the effect needs to follow; they observe each other's classroom teaching and discuss it; a group to report to is available; discussion of classroom problems and their solutions is possible; teachers learn to plan for the future.

Stallings' arguments are directly relevant to the Cypriot strategies for teacher development because they throw light on the question of what issues are conducive to change. She suggests that a teacher is ready to accept an innovative idea and make it a permanent part of his/her teaching practice if he/she first becomes aware of the need to improve by looking critically at his/her own teaching effectiveness. Recognizing limitations in oneself makes room for improvement to come in and take root. The other important theme is the need to adapt workshop ideas to work in the teacher's own classroom and school. This allows knowledge gained at the workshops to feed back into the classrooms in a way that is useful to the teacher as well as to the students. And Stallings implies throughout that collaboration in the form of classroom observation and shared reflection on classroom experience is essential.

The case is made by Fullan (1991) that teacher development should not be limited to one-day workshops, but should be a continuous, career-long process of learning and development. Brause and Mayher, eds. (1991) argue for "a never-ending cycle of professional growth" (p. 23) based on a "process of inquiry" (p. 25) consisting of self-assessment leading to problem-identification exercising reflective thinking while seeking support by other colleagues by getting out of isolation.

sustaining teacher development. In this final section on alternative approaches to teacher development, I propose to emphasize two related ideas well supported in the literature on teacher development. The first of these concerns the contribution of collaborative cultures (integrated school environments) and the second the creation of appropriate opportunities for teachers to learn. "The process and success of teacher development depends very much on the context in which it takes place" (Hargreaves and Fullan, eds., 1992, p. 13).

Collaborative cultures, it is argued, help to avoid situations in which change is inhibited by teacher isolation. "Collaborative cultures facilitate commitment to change and improvement. They also create communities of teachers who no longer have the dependent relationships to externally imposed change that isolation and uncertainty tend to encourage... In collaborative cultures, teachers develop the collective confidence to respond to change critically, selecting and adapting those elements that will aid improvement in their own work context, and rejecting those that will not" (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992, p. 67). This contrasts to individualistic cultures, where: "Like caged birds, teachers within the culture of individualism, it seems, stick with what they know. They are reluctant to fly free, even when given the opportunity" (Hargreaves and Fullan, eds., 1992, pp. 220-221).

Effective forms of collaboration create conditions where teachers can raise and address critical professional issues. However writers, particularly Hargreaves, have warned against what they called contrived collegiality. "In contrived collegiality, collaboration among teachers was compulsory, not voluntary; bounded and fixed in time and space; implementation - rather than development-oriented; and meant to be predictable rather than unpredictable in its outcomes....Two of the major consequences of contrived collegiality, it was found, are inflexibility and inefficiency - in terms of teachers not meeting when they should, of meeting when there is no business to discuss, and of being involved in peer coaching schemes which they have misunderstood or not been able to work through with suitable partners. In this respect, the sad thing about the safe simulation of teacher collaboration that I have called contrived collegiality is not that it deceives teachers, but that it delays, distracts and demeans them" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 208).

Hargreaves (in Hargreaves and Fullan, eds., 1992) refers to weak forms of teacher talk in isolated schools where "...in these staffrooms, educational theory, long-term plans, discussions about basic purposes and underlying assump-

tions are virtually absent features of teacher talk. Sharing is confined instead to stories, tips and news - to things that will not intrude upon or challenge the autonomous judgment of the classroom-isolated teacher" (p. 221).

The problem is thus how to ensure that collaboration is effective rather than contrived. Little (1990) refers to joint work such as, team teaching, planning, observation, and action research, as the strongest form of collaboration. "Joint work implies and creates stronger interdependence, shared responsibility, collective commitment and improvement, and greater readiness to participate in the difficult business of review and critique. This says Little, is the kind of collaborative work and culture most likely to lead to significant improvement" (quoted in Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992, p. 64).

"An integrated environment frames performance and accomplishment as a group (not just as an individual) responsibility: the group's purpose drives individual actions. Thus collective rather than individual accounting for school outcomes characterizes an integrated environment; problems with a teacher's performance are regarded as the responsibility of the group rather than failure on the part of the individual teacher" (McLaughlin and Mei-Ling Yee in Lieberman, ed., 1988, p. 32).

"Colleagues, in short, provide both the stimulation central to opportunity and the feedback and comment that enhance individual capacity or power" (ibid., p. 35). "Isolated teachers, in contrast, lose out on a very special source of growth and motivation - their colleagues - and are left effectively to their own devices to create satisfaction or to forge a teaching career" (ibid., p. 36). "A problem-solving environment is characterized by a strong sense of group purpose....that encourages teachers to reflect on their practice and explore ways to improve it on an ongoing, rather than episodic, basis. It is an environment in which it is safe to be candid and to take the risks inherent in trying out new ideas or unfamiliar practices" (ibid., p. 36).

The second issue to which I wish to refer is the creation of appropriate opportunities for teachers to learn. "Two individually experienced, position-related factors emerge consistently from research on teaching and from organizational research as critical to an individual's effectiveness, satisfaction, and growth: *level of opportunity and level of capacity"* (ibid., p. 26). "*Level of opportunity* means the chance to develop basic competence; the availability of stimulation, challenge, and feedback about performance; and the support for efforts to try new things and acquire new skills. Level of opportunity is central to an expertise-based notion of career because it determines the extent to which an individual can develop increasing degrees of professional competence and reach new levels of mastery. Level of opportunity means much more than the availability of weekend workshops or afterschool staff development sessions" (ibid., pp. 26 - 27).

"A *collegial* environment provides multiple opportunities for interaction and creates expectations of colleagues as regular sources of feedback, ideas, and support. A collegial environment enhances both level of opportunity and level of capacity for teachers, because it serves as a critical, essential source of stimulation and motivation" (ibid., p. 34).

"For our schools to do better than they do we have to give up the belief that it is possible to create the conditions for productive learning when those conditions do not exist for education personnel" (Sarason, quoted in Fullan, 1991, p. 315). "The impact of professional development depends on a combination of *motivation* and *opportunity* to learn....I use the word *opportunity* in an active sense to refer both to the availability of professional development and to how the educational system is organized structurally and normatively *to press* for continuous teacher development" (Fullan, 1991, pp. 326 - 327).

"Teacher development is a complex process whose success depends upon a favorable context for learning and practical, engaging activities. Availability of resources, flexible working conditions, support, and recognition can make all the difference in the desire of teachers to refine their practice. Similarly, staff development experiences that build on collegiality, collaboration, discovery, and solving real problems of teaching and learning summon the strength within a staff, instead of just challenging them to measure up to somebody else's standard... When staff development emphasizes an idea or an approach without considering the person(s) who will implement it, the design and results are weakened" (Louks-Horsley, Harding, Arbuckle, Murray, Dubea, and Williams, 1987, quoted in Fullan, 1991, pp. 318 - 319).

"The key is that unless the teacher is developing, development in schooling will not occur. The corollary is that teachers will develop only when there is a need and opportunity to develop, and when the rewards go to those who become involved in the process. Our model is designed to create those conditions.

What do we mean by development, and how do we propose to cultivate it systematically? Development, as we use the term, involves a set of attitudes, skills and practices. The attitudes or proclivities include clarity of purpose, openness to possibilities, the confidence to act and the determination to prevail. The developer has the expectation that he will be creating programs and practices, and has the initiative to create and implement them. The skills include analysis, goal-setting, planning, program evaluation, and teamwork. The practices involve personal, professional and team designed programs of development. Through the practice of developing and implementing such programs the teacher, in turn, develops the attitudes and skills central to continuing growth, growth that is central in turn to the evolutionary development of schooling" (Gibbons and Norman, in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987, pp. 105-106).

The authors above perceive teacher growth and on-going learning as interrelated. This continuous learning, however, must be provided within the work-

place through various opportunities such as, gaining new skills for continuing improvement, an atmosphere of collaboration, offering stimulation and challenges to teachers as well as constructive feedback on their teaching practice. Successful integrated school environments can facilitate teacher development. Colleagues are suggested as a substantial source of feedback to teachers' growth.

A summary of the literature on teacher development

The literature on teacher development has shed some light on the following matters:

- the nature of teacher development
- the strategies which help teachers help themselves
- the conditions which support and sustain teacher growth

The nature of teacher development: The literature suggests that the traditional procedures of teacher development are rarely successful in achieving their aims. It is assumed that teachers will solve teaching problems, improve teaching practices, grow as professionals and implement the required curriculum by simply supplying them with theories, offering one-day seminars and discussing issues not proposed by teachers. But a wall of ignorance exists among teachers, about their teaching, their students and their classrooms and this needs to be dealt with first. It would appear, however, that the traditional approaches ignore this wall and go directly for imposed change. This prevents the teachers from becoming aware of what to improve in their classrooms and schools, why and how.

In place of such methods, experts have suggested that teachers are asked to intervene in their own development as researchers in classrooms, reflectors on practice, inquirers and decision-makers. Such approaches, it is suggested, make it possible to restructure classrooms, construct new theories, build new relationships between students and teachers, examine and build educational values in classrooms and schools.

The strategies which help teachers help themselves: These alternative strategies imply that teacher development is a process of learning. It should lead to a growth in the teacher's capacities: a capacity to understand classroom experience, a capacity to remain curious of classrooms, a capacity to self-development, a capacity to theorize about practice. It is suggested that teacher development should develop capacities in teachers through modes of intervention which provide learning experiences in order for teachers to finally bring the change needed in their own teaching context. The imposed appears to leave teachers out of their own development process. In fact no development process appears to exist in the traditional procedures of teacher development.

Conditions which support and sustain teacher growth. The teacher-researcher, critical-reflector and the self-motivated teacher will not flourish unless the proper environment exists. For the environment to be conducive to teachers' development, it must offer security, support, opportunities to learn and to develop teachers closer to the realities of their workplace. The development of professional teacher cultures (Lieberman, 1988) in schools; collaborative cultures (Hargreaves, 1992, 1994); critical communities (Kemmis, 1987), and integrated school environments (McLaughlin and Yee, 1988) is suggested. It is argued that these supportive work settings empower teachers to feel as professionals, be critical of the structure of their setting and collaborate in changing the structures of their school in order to improve them.

The alternative approaches commended in much of the literature attach new meanings and establish a new image to the procedures of developing teachers; "...staff development has come to take on quite different meaning in recent years from the traditional notion of in-service" (Wideen in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987, p. 3).

The image of staff development that emerges from this investigation led me to the notion that teacher development needs to follow a procedure where the teachers are not simply to be trained on new teaching strategies, but instead to be presented with appropriate learning opportunities to develop themselves. This image tends to attach to the teachers the role of the professional by allowing them to think for themselves (exercising professional judgment) instead of being dictated to.

Moreover, the traditional approach does not answer the questions about the relationship between the teacher's work and the teacher's development, since development takes place away from the workplace. Development requires that the teacher examines his/her work in order to recognize problems and solve them. The new image, however, tends to offer alternative answers by suggesting development within the teacher's workplace by the teacher himself/herself, embedded in the solution of practical problems.

Investigating Curriculum with regard to Teacher Development

I turn now to the links between teacher development and curriculum development. In chapter 1, the ineffectiveness of the art curriculum in Cyprus was described as part of the problem, creating ineffectiveness in the teaching of art. It appears to lack a sense of progression in learning experiences as well as being unsuccessful in addressing the student audience it seeks to teach. In view of these factors, the question is raised of how might the development of teachers stimulate awareness of curriculum planning and development? A brief reference will be made to traditional forms of curriculum development leading into an examination of alternatives with regard to the teacher, the classroom and the student.

Traditional approaches to curriculum development

Miller, (in Sears and Marshall, eds., 1990) makes the following comments on traditional forms of curriculum development: "Most teachers initially speak of curriculum as "content that we must cover or squeeze into" predetermine structures of time, measurement, assessment, or knowledge. One teacher spoke of her feeling that she and her students were "galloping across the curriculum" to reach the objectives that the "learning specialists" had specified. Other images that emerge in teachers' definitions of curriculum include those of entrapment or enclosure: They speak of feeling "boxed-in" or "confined" by the curriculum; some describe their work as looking for ways "out of" or "around" or "beyond" the mandated texts and performance objectives" (p. 87). His comments reflect the uncomfortable feeling the imposed curriculum creates for teachers. They try unsuccessfully to fit it into their working schedule.

According to Klein, (in Sears and Marshall, eds., 1990) the traditional approach to curriculum development "...emphasizes the role of organized subject matter, often in the form of the disciplines, in the outcomes and processes of curriculum development. The outcomes desired deal primarily with predetermined, logically organized skills or bodies of knowledge that all students are to learn and with the development of their intellectual capacities. The importance of the affective domain is noted in rhetoric, but is usually conspicuously absent in practice" (p. 7). "Goals and objectives are determined; content is selected and logically organized, often in the form of a textbook; teachers are trained to present it efficiently and effectively; and student learning is objectively measured as to a way to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum" (pp. 7-8).

According to Klein others feel that the "deprofessionalization" of teachers is accomplished "...through some of the practices of the traditional approach, such as building "teacher-proof" curricula, defining teaching as a technology, developing curricula at levels beyond the school and classroom that are to be implemented regardless of local conditions and values, and imposing on all students a common core curriculum, as usually defined" (p. 11).

In reference to the traditional approach to curriculum development, Wood (in Sears and Marshall, eds., 1990) writes that teachers "...resist the current trends in school reform that are designed without reference to the democratic mission of schools" (p. 99). "The clear intent is a continuation of attempts to separate the conception and execution of curriculum - to disempower teachers" (p. 100).

Alternative approaches to curriculum development

I now propose to examine four themes concerning the link between curriculum research and development and the development of teachers as it relates to the teacher, the classroom and the student: curriculum and teacher control; curriculum as a shared process between students and teacher; curriculum develop-

ment as the study of classrooms; curriculum development as a process of teacher development.

Curriculum and teacher control: "Real curriculum development....will not be achieved by teachers who feel so used and acted upon. They have got to feel some control over the situation and, in order to feel a sense of control, they have to recognize what it is in schools, classrooms and in themselves that they want to change. They have to understand, at the level of principle, what they are trying to achieve, why they are trying to achieve it, and how any new possibilities might match the logic of their analysis of the need for change"(Rudduck, 1991, p. 92).

Klein (in Sears and Marshall, eds., 1990) in his discussion presents a number of alternative approaches to curriculum that exist today and urges the reader to question and consider all possibilities especially the ones which do not simply consider subject matter but also the teacher, the students and the development of teachers while developing the curriculum. Klein suggests some alternative theoretical positions which include curriculum as self-understanding and focus on the role of the teacher in curriculum planning. He writes "...the teacher is a very powerful influence on what students learn. Attempts in the past have tried to by-pass the teacher by introducing programmed and "teacher-proof" materials, but with little success. The influence of the teacher on curriculum and the teacher as a source of fundamental curriculum knowledge is beginning to be recognized and seriously studied. Scholars sharing this perspective emphasize the practical knowledge and wisdom about curriculum that teachers develop as they make myriad classroom decisions daily. These scholars clearly recognize the teacher as a major curriculum decision maker and reject views of the teacher as merely a technician who is supposed to implement a curriculum planned on high. They advocate helping teachers become even more skillful curriculum developers..." (p. 10).

"Many of us are critical of our reality but we are not empowered to do anything to change matters. This leads to a good deal of frustration and conflict, as we experience contradiction between our values and social reality. We will not improve the quality of our practice if we are passive to these contradictions or if we accept that external authority can entirely dictate the course of curriculum development" (Gurney in Lomax, ed., 1989, p. 15).

"The agenda in class is not merely to study curricular forms but to make curriculum. We engage in building democratic alternatives that teachers can actually use in their classrooms" (Wood, in Sears and Marshall, eds., 1990, p. 108). Wood refers to the Institute of democratic curriculum where teachers collaborate and combine their efforts to develop their own curricula.

The authors above suggest that teachers' control regarding the curriculum has implications on improvement of their practice. Control is suggested in the form of understanding what to change in the curriculum and why. External authority

on the curriculum is not suggested because it makes the curriculum inadequate for classroom use.

Curriculum development as a shared process between students and teachers: Ainscow and Tweddle (1988), make the point that students are a substantial part of curriculum development in the following respects: a) teachers most often need to adjust their pre-planned lessons when they implement them in actual classroom conditions. These adjustments must consider what students already know, the skills they posses, interests and their previous experience. Also, b) students need to understand the teacher's decisions regarding what they are expected to learn, why and how to carry out their tasks and how the classroom will be organized to allow them to do that. "Understanding has a positive effect on motivation" (p. 24). Ainscow and Tweddle believe that students need to become part of the evaluation process of classroom work by being allowed to take part in discussions and negotiations to help them understand their work. They must be encouraged to comment on and interpret from their own perspectives the material they will be taught and the ways in which their learning will take place.

"This concern with students having choice and control over the curriculum generates a number of crucial ingredients for democratic life. First, children come to see themselves as having control over knowledge and information: They produce rather than memorize knowledge. Second, students gain a sense of their own wisdom - their own ability to think, make judgments, and act. Third, they come to believe that they have the right to order their own world. Students so engaged in choosing and directing the curriculum may come to see themselves as citizens with the right and responsibility, as well as the skill, to participate in democratic governance" (Wood in Sears and Marshall, eds., 1990, p. 103).

Wood makes the case for students being allowed to share the responsibility in developing their classroom curriculum. He points out that "... students decide as a team how to approach issues and manage the class. In many respects the responsibility for making the classroom "work" is assumed by the students,..." (ibid., p. 105).

"Finally, teachers need to see curriculum as a shared process.....Curriculum is a process in which teachers and students engage to order and make sense of the world. As such, it requires that teachers have a deep respect for the work of children,..." (ibid., p. 107). Wood argues that students should experience the concept of democracy by sharing in the process of developing a curriculum.

Curriculum development as the study of classrooms: Stenhouse (1975) implied "...that a curriculum is a means of studying the problems and effects of implementing any defined line of teaching....all well-founded curriculum research and development,...., is based on the study of classrooms. It thus rests on the work of teachers" (p. 143). Stenhouse argued "....that effective curriculum develop-

ment of the highest quality depends upon the capacity of teachers to take a research stance to their own teaching. By a research stance I mean a disposition to examine one's own practice critically and systematically" (p. 156).

Elliott (1991) argues that when the curriculum is evaluated and researched by "insiders" (teachers themselves), this can very well be perceived as a solution to the theory and practice problem. Moreover, "...curriculum development is not a process which occurs prior to teaching. The development of curriculum programmes occurs through the reflective practice of teaching. The improvement of teaching is not so much a matter of getting better at implementing an externally designed curriculum, but of developing one;..." (Elliott, 1991, p. 54).

Ainscow and Tweddle (1988) suggest "....that merely to analyze what is being taught and match this to the attainments of the learner is too narrow a perspective. We are proposing, instead, an *analysis of the learning environment.* In particular, we are suggesting that such an analysis should focus on objectives, tasks and activities, and classroom arrangements; and that these should be reviewed in terms of pupils' knowledge, skills, interests and previous experience, and their understanding of our decisions" (pp. 17 - 18).

They argue that classroom evaluation should be an important aspect of teaching. "Evaluation is a continuous process which involves reflecting upon and interpreting events and activities in the classroom, as they happen....We are arguing simply that we look for ways of improving our capacity to learn from, and respond to, our own classroom experiences" (Ainscow and Tweddle, 1988, p. 19). "Classroom evaluation is a process of monitoring and reviewing these aspects as the curriculum is planned and enacted" (ibid., p. 25).

"We define curriculum as the organized pattern of learning events that actually occurs when students and teachers meet. The reality in classrooms is that teachers establish that curriculum. And its substance may or may not have much to do with curriculum guides, texts, district policy, or targeted innovations from outside or above" (Gibbons and Norman in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987, p. 105).

What is emphasized above is that curriculum is what is happening in the classroom rather than a predetermined curriculum. Classroom teaching needs to be studied, evaluated, criticized with regard to curriculum development.

Curriculum development as a process of teacher development: Rubin, (in Wideen and Andrews, eds., 1987) makes some useful comments regarding curriculum and teacher development. "Our notions about the relationship between curriculum and staff development have undergone major upheaval. We once assumed that expert minds should select instructional content, and teachers should then be trained to use appropriate methods for conveying this knowledge. Determining objectives and teaching objectives were viewed as separate

responsibilities. There was also an implicit belief that teachers, for a variety of reasons, were ill-equipped to engage in curriculum decision-making" (p. 170).

"As developments continued, however, a number of circumstances became clear. First, teachers can indeed contribute to curriculum design, especially with respect to such things as instructional sequence, pacing, and the kinds of learning activities which best accommodate particular instructional aims.

Second, as teacher involvement in curriculum decision-making increased, we also discovered that teachers can carry on significant, reality-based, research on various curriculum problems.....

Third, as more and more teachers participate in instructional planning, it has become apparent that involvement in curricular issues, in itself, is a healthy form of staff development" (ibid., p. 170).

Later Rubin identifies some additional principles in the process of linking staff development and curriculum. These include: linking directly teacher development schemes and particular objectives for curriculum; teachers and administrators need to collaborate; continuous teacher development should be treated as an essential in curriculum evaluation; teachers and administrators need to collaborate in curriculum evaluation; staff members should be allowed to solve curriculum problems; staff members should be helped to command subject matter; emphasize reflective thinking on teaching.

According to Stenhouse, (1975) "...the uniqueness of each classroom setting implies that any proposal - even at school level - needs to be tested and verified and adapted by each teacher in his own classroom. The ideal is that the curricular specification should feed a teacher's personal research and development programme through which he is progressively increasing his understanding of his own work and hence bettering his teaching" (p. 143).

Stenhouse also discussed issues relating curriculum and teacher role through research and experimentation. He suggested a research model of curriculum design and an alternative role to the curriculum developer. "In order to move from product or process models of curriculum development towards a research model, it is necessary first to cast the developer not in the role of the creator or man with a mission, but in that of the investigator. The curriculum he creates is then to be judged by whether it advances our knowledge rather than by whether it is right. It is conceived as a probe through which to explore and test hypotheses and not as a recommendation to be adopted" (p. 125).

Stenhouse argued for the Popperian view of policy regarding the curriculum. This suggests "...that policies evolve and improve continuously and progressively by the study of their shortcomings and their gradual elimination. On such a view the concepts of success and failure become irrelevant" (p. 125).

The Stenhouse research model for curriculum is thus not a static set of rules which are given from above as a formula to good teaching practices. Classroom situations are always changing, evolving to conditions that a rigid curriculum cannot accommodate. The curriculum developer is perceived as one who explores problems through an on-going reflection on his/her own practice and not one who merely offers solutions.

A summary of the literature on curriculum development

My concern at this stage was to establish a link between curriculum development and teacher development. Overall, the arguments presented suggest that traditional forms of curricula are designed out of context and away from the realities of classrooms and are therefore difficult to implement. What is suggested is that the participation of teachers can make the curriculum applicable to particular students' needs and unique classroom situations. It is argued that this participation should be in the form of building a curriculum (a democratic curriculum, a personal curriculum, a workable curriculum) not merely trying to implement an imposed one. The curriculum is to be build by activating certain capacities within the teacher as a researcher and a reflector on practice, in collaboration with students and other colleagues.

Overall the achievements thus far dealt with defining the problem in chapter 1 which centered on the concern of an inadequate teacher development scheme in Cyprus. Some useful ideas about teacher development and its relationship to curriculum development were identified as part of an attempt to clarify the nature of teacher development and the way it stimulates curriculum development through an investigation on recent thinking of the issues .

The investigation opened the way to alternatives which emphasized the teacher and his /her classroom work in his/her development. Becoming aware of new possibilities which could sustain teacher growth, the next step was to proceed to form the methodology in order to plan the intervention into the Cypriot educational scene and answer the research questions formulated in chapter 1.

Chapter: **3**

Methodology: Action Research

I needed a methodology to help me answer my research questions, while considering the context where these questions would be researched. To be more specific, how could I intervene in the Cypriot educational system? what would be acceptable to Cypriot teachers? could this methodology satisfy concerns expressed over teachers' lack of awareness about the issues and teacher isolation? would it be a suitable tool to challenge the existing teacher development scheme in Cyprus? In addition, I hoped to select a strategy which might stimulate awareness on curriculum research and development in Cyprus. I wanted to incorporate the new meanings of teacher development while showing a way to intervene in the educational system in Cyprus. I needed an approach which would encourage teacher participation. Ideally, the procedure chosen should allow the teacher to research, critically reflect, and develop self-understanding within the workplace.

The following chapter therefore explores the suitability of action research as a methodology to examine teacher development processes for this research and as a possible tool to challenge the existing approach to teacher development in Cyprus.

Action Research

In this section I shall discuss how various authors define action research and argue for it as a mode of inquiry in education which can deliver effective teacher development. A presentation of a variety of perspectives on action research procedures and action research models follows leading into an interpretation of an action research model appropriate for this particular project. I conclude by arguing that a more traditional research methodology would have been less appropriate for this particular study.

Both McNiff (1988) and Hopkins (1985) describe how action research was originated by Lewin as a method of researching social problems in improving industrial situations. Lewin believed that the best way to get people to move ahead was to change them in their own lives stressing the "importance of democratic collaboration and participation" (McNiff, 1988, p. 22). "He saw this sort of participatory procedure as much more effective in solving problems of human interrelationships than an imposed, structured process, into which people were expected to fit....The action of action research, whether on a small or large scale, implies change in people's lives, and therefore in the system in which they live" (ibid., p. 3)

Lawrence Stenhouse (1975) saw a connection between action research and his own notion of the teacher as the researcher in his own classroom. Later John Elliott's Ford Teaching Project (1991) made more known the procedures of

action research in doing research in one's classroom. He eventually established the Classroom Action Research Network (CARN).

Definitions and Rationales for Action research

In the section which follows I shall review the ideas of some of the more important writers concerning action research.

McNiff (1988) defines action research as "...an increasingly popular movement in educational research. It encourages a teacher to be reflective of his own practice in order to enhance the quality of education for himself and his pupils. It is a form of self-reflective enquiry that is now being used in school-based curriculum development, professional development, school-improvement schemes, and so on, and, as such, it actively involves teachers as participants in their own educational process" (p. 1). She further connects it to the issue of theory and practice. "Action research approaches education as a unified exercise, seeing a teacher in class as the best judge of his total educational experience. It is a powerful method of bridging the gap between the theory and practice of education; for here teachers are encouraged to develop their own personal theories of education from their own class practice" (p. 1).

"The social basis of action research is involvement; the educational basis is improvement. Its operations demand changes. Action research means ACTION, both of the system under consideration, and of the people involved in that system" (p. 3). "...action research is probably more useful to the needs of teachers in the living systems of their own classrooms than theories that are often more sociological than educational" (p. 10).

Elliott (1991) also claims that through action research the teacher is helped to resolve the gap that exists between theory and practice. He presents a useful discussion on imposed theory as not being valid educational knowledge and thus useless to teachers. He cites a number of arguments which clarify issues relating to the relationship between theory and practice. "First, teachers feel 'theory' is threatening because it is produced by a group of outsiders who claim to be experts at generating valid knowledge about educational practices....Theory for teachers is simply the product of power exercised through the mastery of a specialized body of techniques.... To bow to a 'theory' is to deny the validity of one's own experience-based professional craft knowledge" (Elliott, 1991, pp. 45-46). Elliott emphasizes practice rather than external theory which is general and irrelevant to unique situations.

Another point he emphasizes in relation to action research is the improvement of practice through a continuous process of reflection. "This kind of joint reflection about the relationship in particular circumstances between processes and products is a central characteristic of what Schon has called *reflective practice* and others, including myself, have termed *action research*" (ibid., p. 50).

Elliott argues that "...such activities as teaching, educational research, curriculum development and evaluation are all integral aspects of an action-research process.... The fundamental aim of action research is to improve practice rather than to produce knowledge" (ibid., p. 49).

"Evaluation is an integral component of action research...curriculum development is not a process which occurs prior to teaching. The development of curriculum programmes occurs through the reflective practice of teaching....From an action-research perspective, the improvement of teaching and the development of the teacher are integral dimensions of curriculum development. Hence the saying that 'there can be no curriculum development without teacher development'.....it implies that curriculum development in itself constitutes a process of teacher development" (ibid., 54).

"Teachers' attempts through action research to improve the educational quality of pupils' learning experiences necessitates reflection about the ways in which curriculum structures shape pedagogy. 'Educational' action research implies the study of curriculum structures, not from a position of detachment, but from one of a commitment to effect worthwhile change" (ibid., 55).

Also, "I would argue that the widespread emergence of collaborative action research as a teacher-based form of curriculum evaluation and development is a creative response to the growth of technical-rational systems of hierarchical surveillance and control over teachers' professional practices" (ibid., p. 56). Elliott clearly relates curriculum development to teacher development and the issue of being committed to change. He attaches to the teacher the role of creator and evaluator of the curriculum.

Elliott brings into focus the need for the teachers themselves to reflect on their own teaching practice without external interference which can appear to be threatening. My concern to foster teacher awareness about classroom matters or teaching practice was reinforced by Elliott's comments on teachers reflecting on their own practice.

Somekh (Scottish Council for Research in Education, Edinburgh) the co-ordinator for CARN (Collaborative Action Research Network), University of East Anglia, offers the following rationale in defense of action research. "Since a major aim of action research is to develop the practical wisdom or situational understanding of the practitioner researcher, it constitutes a powerful means of professional development. The process of change is integrated with the development of new understandings of the implications of personal action, in particular of the unintended consequences of habitual or routinised behaviour. The nature of the change, and the strategies for bringing it about, are under the control of the practitioner ...." (from a paper in the British Educational Research Journal, Vol. 21, No. 3, 1995, p. 343).

Hopkins (1985) refers to "this form of research in which teachers do research in their own classrooms for the purpose of improving practice, teacher re-

search. The phrase, teacher research, has the advantage of being simple and identifies the major actor and the process involved" (p. 25). He further links teacher research to self-study which binds it to professionalism and emancipation. "Not content to be told what to do or being uncertain about what it is one is doing, teachers who engage in their own research are developing their professional judgement and are moving towards emancipation and autonomy" (p. 25). "Action research combines a substantive act with a research procedure; it is action disciplined by enquiry, a personal attempt at understanding whilst engaged in a process of improvement and reform" (p. 32).

Hopkins argues, that a number of gaps occurring in the teaching process, can be bridged through classroom research. These include the gap between what the teacher asserts as his/her teaching philosophy in public and the way he/she behaves in the classroom in order to implement that philosophy. Furthermore, there is mention of the existence of a gap between the teacher's objectives for a lesson and the way the lesson is taught in actual classroom conditions. Hopkins refers to yet another discrepancy which is created between the teacher's account of the lesson and what others see in his/her lesson. "All of these discrepancies reflect a gap between behaviour and intention and are a source for classroom research problems. The Ford Teaching Project, for example, monitored the performance gap between teacher's aspirations and their practice" (p. 48). According to Hopkins, through classroom research, the teachers could identify a teaching problem and at the same time think of ways through which this problem could be remedied. "It is this gap between what is and what could be that is an important source of motivation in classroom research by teachers" (p. 49).

Oja and Smulyan (1989) emphasize collaboration as a key characteristic of action research. "Four basic elements of action research are its collaborative nature, its focus on practical problems, its emphasis on professional development, and its need for a project structure which provides participants with time and support for open communication" (p. 12).

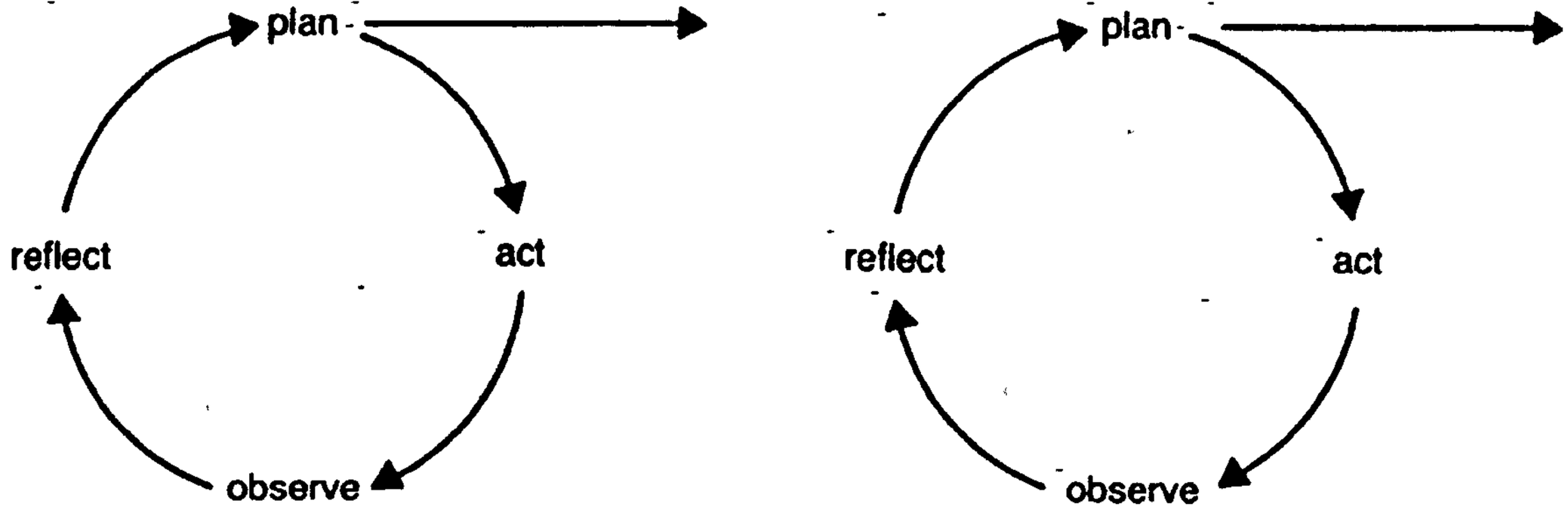
Stenhouse, as McNiff writes, contributed immensely to the promotion of action research. Stenhouse was director of the Schools Council Humanities Project from 1967-1972. The project's objective was to try new roles for teachers and students in order to create a better relationship between the two. He sought to attach more flexibility to the teacher's authoritarian role by allowing more freedom to the students. "His central message for teachers was that they should regard themselves as researchers, as the best judges of their own practice, and then the natural corollary would be an improvement of education" (McNiff, 1988, p. 25).

Procedures and models of action research

The strategy of action research involves an action reflection cycle which consists of a series of steps. The original cycle of Lewin has been given many variations through the years. In the following section, McNiff (1988) describes and criticizes the models designed by Kemmis, Elliott and Ebbutt and offers her own alternative.

According to McNiff, Lewin described action research as a spiral of steps. Each step had four stages: planning, acting, observing, reflecting. The first step of planning, acting, observing and reflecting moves on to another step of re-planning, acting, observing and reflecting. This way the person doing the research can produce a series of steps. Lewin's model is illustrated in Figure: 1.1.

Figure: 1.1 Lewin's model (McNiff, 1988, p. 23)

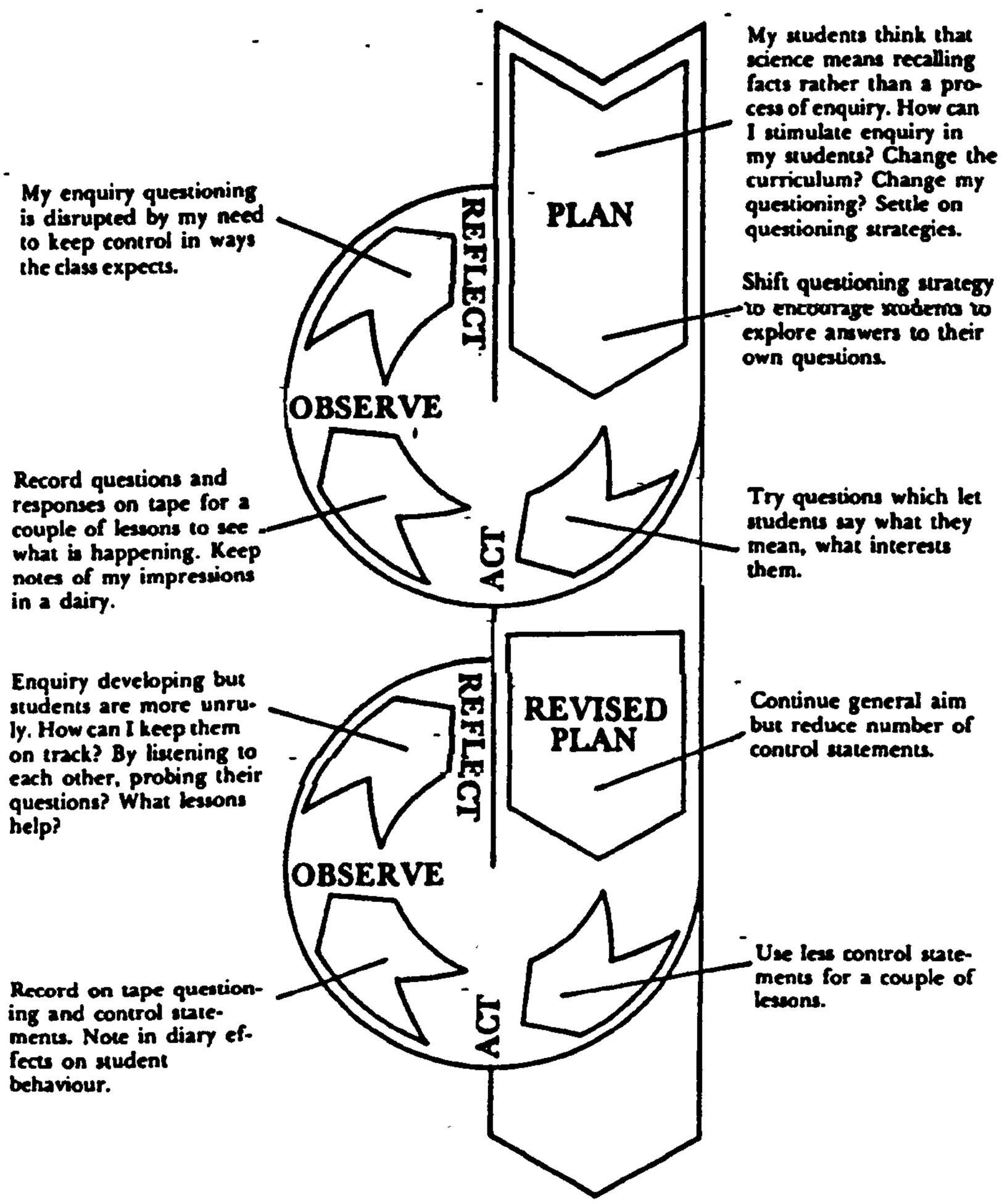


McNiff suggests that Kemmis encouraged teachers "to be reflective researchers of their own practice" (p. 29). He based his model on the "self-reflective spiral of planning, acting, observing, reflecting, re-planning as the basis for a problem-solving manoeuvre" (p. 26). He based his model on the concept offered by Lewin but applied it to education, using the term educational action research. Kemmis' model is illustrated in Figure: 1.2. The diagram illustrates "the movement from one critical phase to another, and the way in which progress may be made through the system" (p. 26).

Elliott's model illustrated in Figure: 1.3, is more complex. It consists of three cycles of steps which include identifying the initial idea, 'reconnaissance', general plan of three action steps, implement action step 1, monitor, explain any failures to implement and revise general idea; implement next action steps and repeat the same procedure. McNiff argues, that he "agrees with the basic idea of sequential action-reflection steps running into cycles, as elaborated by Kemmis. His schema is more elaborate, however, allowing for greater fluidity between the stages, and he has produced a more refined diagram" (p. 29).

According to McNiff, Ebbutt does not see a spiral as appropriate in which to describe the action reflection process. Instead, he offers the diagram in Figure: 1.4 which consists of cycles of steps where the general idea is revised after the researcher tries to explain the failure to implement the amended plan. After the idea is revised the researcher tries again.

Figure: 1.2 Kemmis' model (McNiff, 1988, p. 27)



McNiff (1988) highlights four criticisms directed to the models. "Teachers should be aware, however, of the uses and possible limitation of the schemes in practice. The points are:

1. There is movement away from Lewin's original notions.
2. The schemes tend to be rigid and confusing.
3. They cannot deal with novel situations within the main focus.
4. They are not in themselves educational" (p. 33).

She points out that the models of action research suggested by Kemmis, Elliott and Ebbutt tend to be more 'prescriptive' than 'descriptive'. Also she argues that they are not educational because they lack flexibility and cannot accommodate spontaneous episodes. "In their efforts to portray a stylised reality,

the authors have opted for systems resting on an intellectual basis, and the visual representations reflect this mental reality rather than class reality" (p. 35). She argues that Kemmis' spiral is not flexible enough to allow for related problems that might come up during the process of doing research on the original problem. A major limitation is that Kemmis' model assumes that life moves on one step at a time, ignoring that other classroom problems will arise and redirect the main focus of the research. The natural move would be for the teacher to move on to the new problem and then return to the original one. His approach does not accommodate this flexibility.

Figure: 1.3 Elliott's model (McNiff, 1988, p. 30)

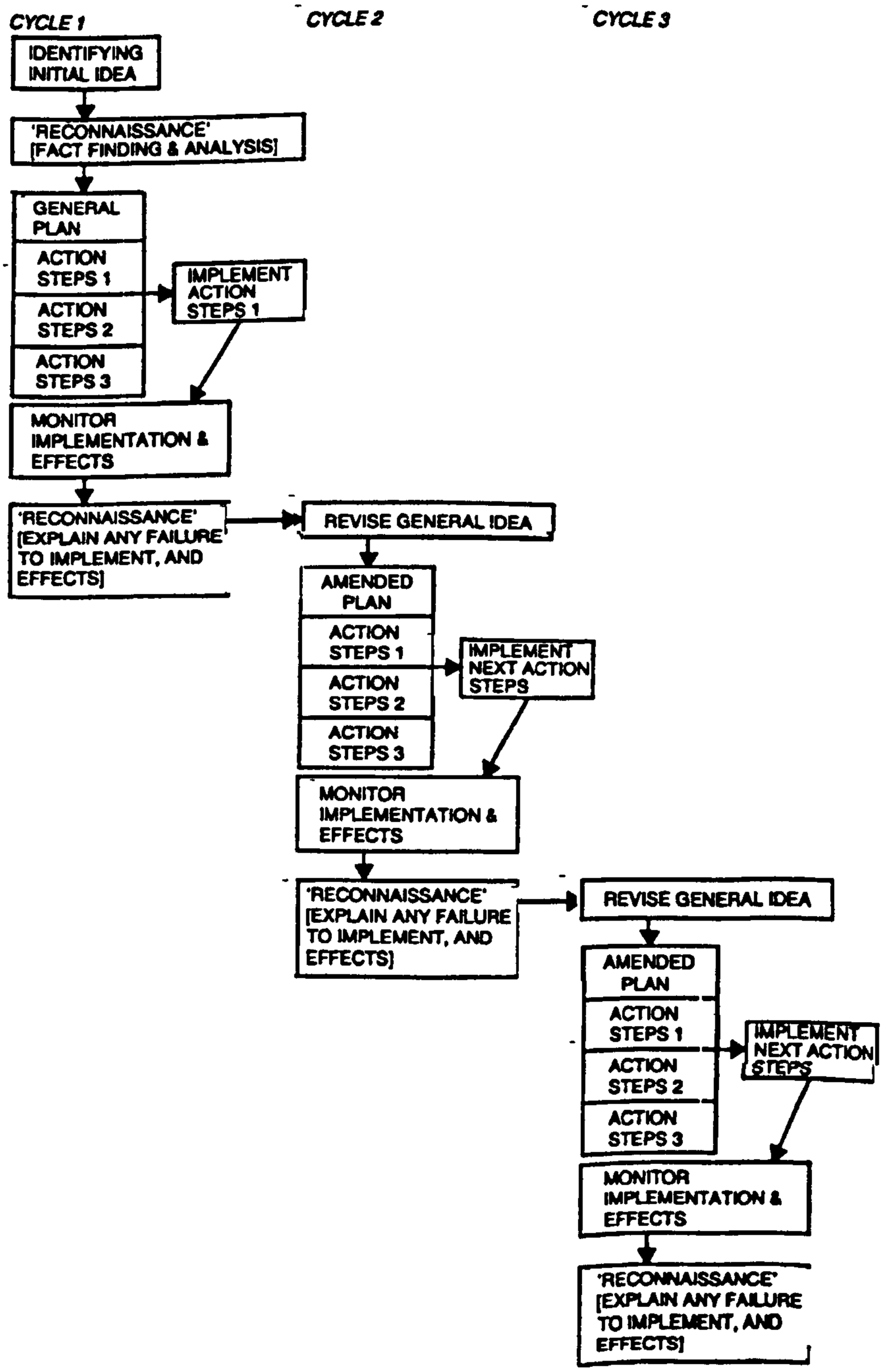
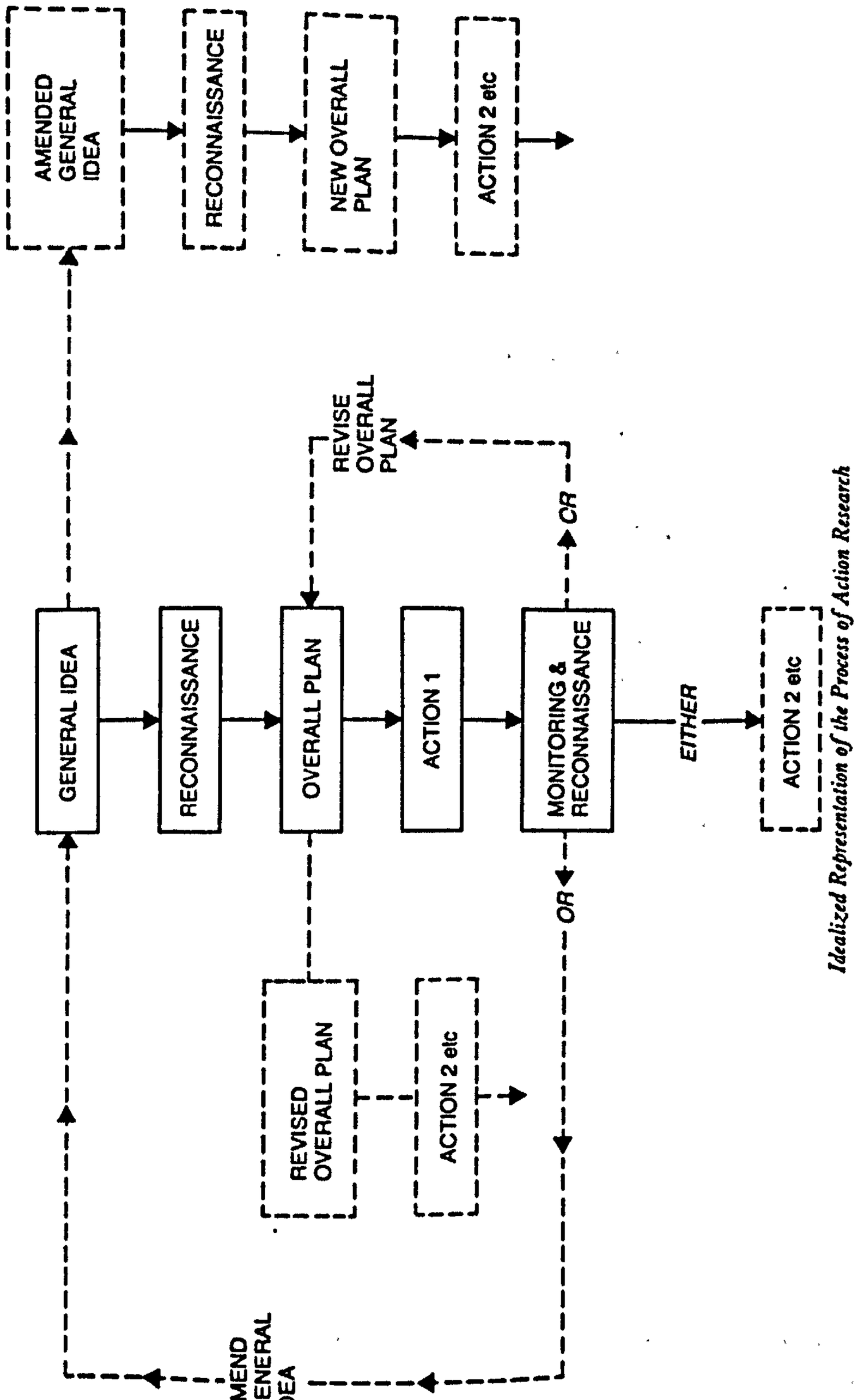


Figure: 1.4 Ebbutt's model (McNiff, 1988, p. 32)



Idealized Representation of the Process of Action Research

In support of her case, McNiff quotes extensively the work of Whitehead. According to McNiff (1988), Whitehead "...feels that Kemmis, Elliott and Ebbutt are in

danger of moving away from the reality of educational practice. He is keen to keep the teacher-practitioner at the center of the enquiry. Unless we keep the living 'I' in our educational discussions, he maintains, action research loses touch with reality and becomes an academic exercise.... He maintains that the focus of educational research should be to improve the relationship between educational theory and professional development" (p. 37). He used an approach (when he worked with a small group of teachers) "that suggested that improvements in class were sustained by the teachers' self-evaluation of the differences between their ideas and their practice" (p. 37).

According to McNiff, in an attempt to make the action reflection cycle more meaningful to teachers and their classroom realities, Whitehead restructured the steps of the cycle into statements. These statements offer to teachers a systematic way through which practical educational problems can be confronted. They are: I sense that a problem exists because my values as an educator are denied in practice; I think of a possible solution to the problem; I test this imagined solution and evaluate the outcome; the evaluation helps to re-formulate the problem.

"The thrust of Jack Whitehead's argument is that action research must of itself be educational. It must help teachers try to make sense of their normal, everyday practice.

This action-reflection spiral is a basis for teacher self-improvement. It can be tied in with a set of questions which act as a starting point to curriculum reform:

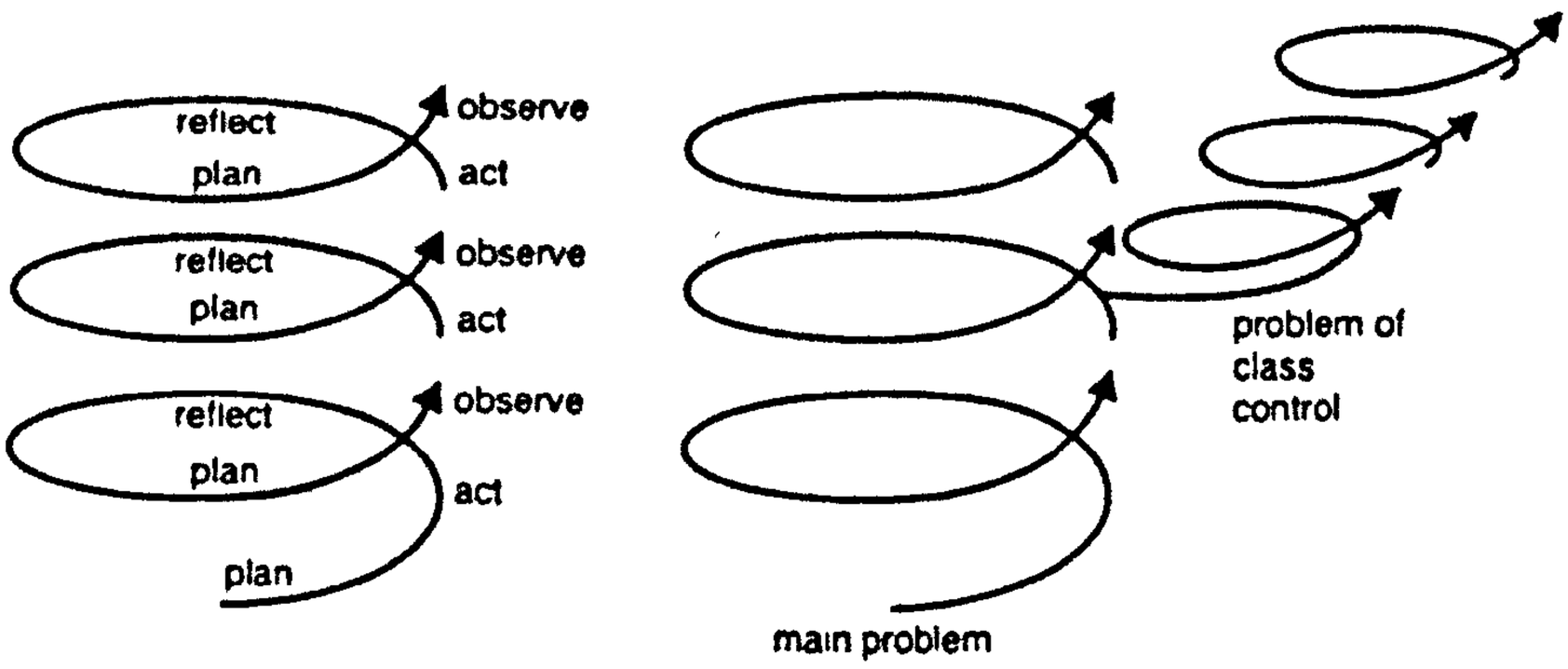
1. What is your concern?
2. Why are you concerned?
3. What do you think you could do about it?
4. What kind of 'evidence' could you collect to help you make some judgement about what is happening?
5. How would you collect such 'evidence'?
6. How could you check that your judgement about what has happened is reasonably fair and accurate"? (pp. 38 - 39).

McNiff offers her own action reflection model. She argues that a theory with "generative capacity" is needed "...that could communicate the potential of one theory to create new theories. Rather than stopping at the traditional notion of a theory arising out of a specific set of circumstances and having relevance only to that setting, a generative approach views a theory as an organic device to create other theories that may be applied in other settings" (p. 43).

She argues "... that there was a need for a theory with generative capacity to allow for spontaneous, creative episodes....The spirals of planning, acting, observing, reflecting, re-planning, in the frameworks presented so far are able to deal with only one problem at a time. Action research should offer the capacity to deal with a number of problems at the same time by allowing the spirals to develop spin-off spirals, just as in reality one problem will be symptomatic of many other underlying problems" (McNiff, 1988, pp. 43-44).

"Generative action research enables a teacher-researcher to address many different problems at one time without losing sight of the main issue" (p. 45). McNiff's cycle of generative capacity is illustrated in Figure: 1.5.

Figure: 1.5 McNiff's model (McNiff, 1988, p. 44)



In contrast to the cycle concept, Hopkins (1985) offers a different perspective. He prefers the name 'classroom research by teachers' rather than 'action research' (p. 40) and criticizes the models of Kemmis, Elliott and Ebbutt because "...the tight specification of process steps and cycles may trap teachers within a framework which they may come to depend on and which will consequently inhibit independent action. The original purpose of teacher research was to free teachers from the constrains of prespecified research designs....They delineate a sequence of stages, but say little about the 'what' and the 'how' within these stages.... At worst, they trap the practitioners within a set of assumptions that bear little relationship to their reality and, consequently, constrain their freedom of action" (p. 40).

Hopkins offers a series of methods and techniques that can be used by teachers as alternatives to the cycle of steps suggested by Kemmis, Elliott and Ebbutt. These are: suggestions by which the teacher can identify and initiate research projects in his/her classroom; suggestions on ways by which data can be gathered on classroom activity; ways of interpreting and analyzing data from classroom research and ways in which the process of classroom research can be supported. According to Hopkin's approach, the teacher is rather encouraged to identify a classroom problem; carry research on the problem in the classroom; experiment through a variety of possible solutions; gather and analyze data; make the research public.

Somekh (1995), supports this view of not relying heavily on models of the action reflection cycle because people starting out on action research "...tend to interpret them too literally as representing a set of very distinct steps, rather than broad stages in an integrated process...The models are no more than graphical tools to help us to conceptualise the action research process and, used in this way, they are useful" (from a paper in the British Educational Journal, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 342-343).

Bassey (in Hustler, Cassidy and Cuff, eds., 1986) believes that action research does not need sophisticated methods. "The acts of defining needs, intentions, resources and strategies all entail decisions which, although involving value-judgements, can be illuminated by empirical data. And the collection of empirical data implies research" (p. 19). He offers a list on types of data to collect on students, other teachers, parents and the self. These data he claims express "the scope for classroom research" (p. 19).

Designing an action research methodology

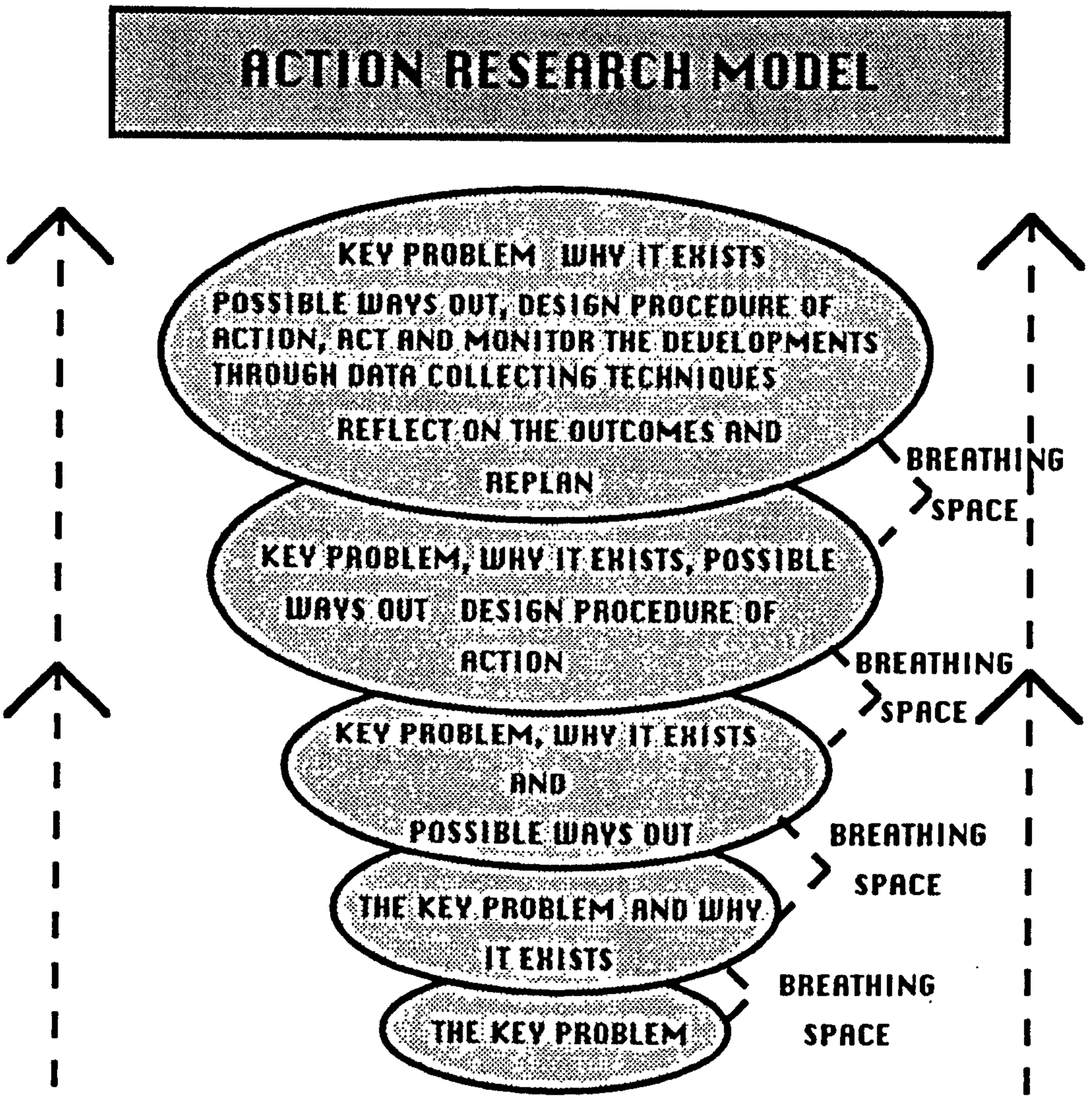
In the light of the discussion in the previous section in which I have outlined the major approaches to action research together with some significant critiques, I now consider the decisions I reached in the process of designing my own strategy.

Based on my teaching experience, I felt that an effective action reflection cycle needs to be more classroom-oriented. This would help the practitioner feel comfortable while examining classroom activities without distorting the reality of the classroom. The new problem that is created while investigating the main problem should not be separate (as McNiff indicates) but should be added to the main problem thus expanding the circles. I considered for my action reflection cycle a set of simple steps with flexibility and cumulative capacity to accommodate the unpredictability of classroom activity.

The action research spiral should follow the character of the educational process which is a developmental one. The stages of the cycle should not be equal in size, as argued by McNiff, because as we go up the activity grows. There is a build-up of stages taking place. Each stage takes knowledge or information from the previous stage and adds to it. I perceive the action reflection cycle as a build-up of circles which become larger as they develop in an upward direction. As the circles move towards the outside they expand and become larger. This is illustrated in Figure: 1.6. It is shown in diagrammatic form how the new interpretation perceives the relationship of the various stages or levels of action research when seen from an aerial view. They are a group of developing interrelated circles. It is developmental in character and yet unified. As the cycle moves up, its stages hold together. They are not dealt with as separate entities. Each carries with it the previous stage and grows out of it. It is thus a unifying process which does not loose track of the original problem, but rather builds on it.

A reflection cycle should be useful in solving classroom problems but also in offering a flexible procedure in order for teachers to take time to comprehend what is taking place. An educational process such as the one illustrated in Figure: 1.6 needs to be developmental in order to allow for individual creativity to come through, to understand each part of the process, or even the option of stopping the process to rest.

Figure: 1.6 The action-research model developed for this study



By comparison, I suggest that the schemes of Kemmis, Elliott and Ebbutt tend to be rather mechanical, with an emphasis on the model itself as a procedure and not on its interpretation as a working tool in an unstable, constantly-changing classroom situation. There is no breathing space in between stages to provide for the particular factors which characterize student-teacher relationships in specific settings. My hope is that the new model might accommodate more effectively two elements: the unstable classroom situations and the necessary time for the teacher to develop while he/she is engaged in action research rather than simply going through the set procedure.

Action research versus traditional research

Many authors defend action research by way of comparing it with traditional research which they claim is ineffective as a means of teacher development and as a useful research procedure for education. These arguments are explored below.

A number of educational researchers have claimed that action research is not a valid form of research because it is not systematic and its results are not generalizable.

McNiff (1988) presents an interesting series of questions and answers which seek to answer this challenge. She makes the case that, using an action research approach she can very well monitor her actions systematically. Her findings are made public. Detailed records are kept of her and her students' activities in the classroom. This activity qualifies as research. Research findings must be tested in classrooms to test whether they are adequate for unique situations. "If they do not fit I am entitled to conduct my own research into my own educational situation, and develop an alternative theory based on my own experience, that is grounded in the reality of my own teaching and validated by consultation with others" (p. 122).

McNiff argues that this is valid because she can demonstrate through practical proof that she can back up her claims. These claims will be about an improvement in her class practice, her students' learning and her own understandings. All of her theories are embedded in practice. She goes on to say that "Traditional research is all about scientific results which may be quantified, duplication of tests, replication of experiments, prediction of how the data will fall out. Action research is all about people explaining to themselves why they behave as they do, and enabling them to share this knowledge with others" (p. 124).

McNiff (1988) argues that both the empiricist and the interpretive approaches to research are inadequate in solving educational problems. She explains the empiricist approach this way: "At the heart of this tradition is the idea of evidence being empirically tested: that is, the only valid data is what is directly experienced through the senses. Knowledge of educational practice is collected in terms of what can be observed. It is an assumption that data is gathered about other people's practice by an external recorder, and it is his interpretation of that practice that provides the substance of the research...The researcher is regarded as a reliable interpreter of the action, since he is external to it and can therefore make objective comments about what is going on. Interference by the actor is regarded as contaminating, in that his personal opinion might skew otherwise objectively determinable facts" (p. 11).

"The epistemology of the empiricist tradition is that theory determines practice. Teachers are encouraged to fit their practice into a stated theory, and this can often lead to malaise" (p. 13).

McNiff criticizes the interpretive approach as well because "...the methods of interpretive enquiry are more appropriate to sociological issues than educational; and that the notion of educational knowledge is seen as a controlled commodity. The methods of data collection, analysis and synthesis are different from those of the empiricist tradition, one emphasising the quantitative and the other the qualitative; but the concept of control by the researcher of the researchee is equally

apparent in both.....the researcher is still imposing a framework into which the researchee must fit himself and his practice. The request of the interpretive researcher is: 'Let me look at what you are doing here. I think I know what you are doing; but I will listen to what you think you are doing, and together we will work towards a true account of your practice.' Such an approach is not by itself educational, in that it does not encourage a teacher to review his own practice, to make suggestions as to how to move forward that practice and his understanding of his own educational development" (p. 18).

"Both the empiricist and the interpretive traditions are grounded in subjects other than educational practice. They do not allow for such questions as 'How can I improve my class practice?' or 'How can I account for my own educational development?'- first, because it is not part of their methodological design to ask such practical, problem-based questions, and second, because it is not part of their conceptual repertoire to answer them. They can make predictions and give descriptions of the phenomena of social settings. They cannot give educational explanations for the events within those settings. For that, another sort of approach is needed, one that will tackle the practical issues of why things happen as they do, rather than as they might" (p. 18).

"What is needed is a new educational tradition, a coherent approach to the everyday practice and problems of teachers in ordinary classrooms who are trying to understand and make sense of their professional and personal lives" (McNiff, 1988, p. 19). McNiff suggests that 'educational action research' as called by Carr and Kemmis (1986) "...is a possible answer to the deficiencies of research traditions that have been sociology, rather than education,...not only to observe, record and describe the work in that field, but to widen the perspective and make the investigation itself educational. Anyone who becomes involved in the enquiry is committed, and it is this act of commitment to improvement and to reflect on consequences that is educational" (p. 20).

Carr and Kemmis (1986) as well foster the notion that traditional research cannot solve educational problems. "Despite their differences, however, both the 'interpretive' and positivist approach convey a similar understanding of educational researchers and of their relationship to the research act. In both approaches, the researcher stands outside the researched situation adopting a disinterested stance in which any explicit concern with critically evaluating and changing the educational realities being analyzed is rejected" (p.99). "Positivist theories, by failing to recognize the importance of the interpretations and meanings that individuals employ to make their reality intelligible, fail to identify the phenomena to be explained. In consequence, the kind of theories that are produced are often trivial and useless, even though they may appear to be sophisticated and elaborate" (p. 103).

"For the emphasis of the interpretive model on the subjective meanings of action tends to imply that social reality is nothing over and above the way people perceive themselves and their situation. But social reality is not simply structured and shaped by concepts and ideas. It is also structured and shaped by such things as

historical forces and economic and material conditions" (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p. 104).

"The findings assembled through research and any new theories it may offer will have little *educational* validity if they are unrelated to the theories and understandings of educational practitioners. And they will have little *educational* value if they do not enable practitioners to develop a more refined understanding of what they are doing and what they are trying to achieve. In this sense, the only legitimate task for any educational research to pursue is to develop theories of educational practice that are rooted in the concrete educational experiences and situations of practitioners and that attempt to confront and resolve the educational problems to which these experiences and situations give rise" (ibid., p. 118).

Somekh (1995), argues that a main difference is that the findings of action research are fed back directly into practice with the purpose of achieving change. Furthermore, the people engaged in action research are directly involved with the setting being researched.

Hopkins (1985) argues that "the most unfortunate aspect of traditional educational research is that it is extremely difficult to apply its findings to classroom practice" (p. 26). Teachers regard educational research as irrelevant to their world "...because of the differing conceptions of teaching held by teachers and researchers" (p. 27).

Elliott (1991) refers to the problem of theory and practice which cannot be resolved through traditional forms of research and experts on research. The techniques outside researchers use for teachers' practices "possess little resemblance to the way teachers process information as a basis for their practical judgements" (p. 45). Furthermore, he comments that theory "is what outside researchers say about their practices after they have applied their special techniques of information processing. As such it is remote from their practical experience of the way things are" (p. 46).

According to Elliott, the generalizations produced by outside experts on research regarding teachers' practices appear threatening to teachers. "If it applies to all contexts of practice, then it implies that the experience of teachers operating in particular circumstances is not an adequate basis on which to generate professional knowledge: this contradicts their own self-understanding. Generalization constitutes the denial of the individual practitioners' everyday experience. It reinforces the powerlessness of teachers to define what is to count as knowledge about their practices" (p. 46).

Gurney (in Lomax, 1989) cites some differences between traditional research and action research. In the latter, the teacher is a participant in the research and is central to the process. This is very different from other forms of research which diminish the role of the teacher. Moreover, "...teachers need to be encouraged to move out of their submissive position and to take a much

more innovatory, as opposed to implementary, role in curriculum development. One way to do this is to adopt the perspective of researcher, since educational enquiry is a vital way in which we can improve our understanding of teaching and learning and thereby may improve our practice" (p. 15).

Authors argue that traditional research does not resolve educational problems because it simply cites the problems without providing the proper means by which to solve them. This simply does not motivate change. McNiff, Carr and Kemmis, Somekh, Hopkins, Elliott and Gurney in their defense of action research argue that the teacher is ignored in traditional educational research and generalized outcomes which result from traditional research, cannot be applied to unique situations.

In this section, I explored the adequacy of action research as a methodology for this study by way of investigating recent views and citing definitions and rationales, procedures and models as well as comparisons to traditional research.

Conclusions

Having reviewed in the first half of this chapter the rationales, procedures and critiques of action research, it seems that a case can be made for the following assertions:

1. action research seems to satisfy concerns expressed over traditional procedures of teacher development.
2. through action research the teacher might answer questions which could improve on a problematic teaching situation; not simply set the problem.
3. action research procedures motivate teachers to improve.

I shall briefly discuss each of these claims.

1. In the previous chapters, criticisms have been made of traditional forms of teacher development. In this, traditional forms of educational research have also been questioned. It has also been argued that action research has the capacity to resolve these concerns and deliver an improvement in teaching and better learning conditions for students.

Concerns expressed over traditional teacher development schemes rest on four premises:

a) traditional teacher development courses do not motivate teachers towards improvement and a willingness to learn;
b) seminars and workshops offered by teacher development courses are irrelevant to matters of classroom teaching and moreover, incapable of improving teaching practice. They are designed by outside experts not acquainted with classroom problems. Teachers are offered general theories which cannot be applied to unique problems;

c) teachers are stripped of their professionalism since their own perceptions of their teaching practice are denied;
d) traditional forms of research produce findings which are irrelevant to classroom teaching and unacceptable to teachers.

Action research aims to sustain teachers' commitment and willingness to learn by involving them in their own self-development and giving them control over the process of change. Teacher control is exhibited through self-study, self-reflective practice, and an assumption that teachers participate in decision making. This secures their willingness to learn and to take part in research; and this leads directly to empowerment.

Since the problems studied are real classroom problems which teachers encounter in their practice, and the solutions sought are for improving those particular problems, then it follows that what is gained through action research procedures, is directly relevant to teaching and its improvement. Furthermore, the gap between theory and practice can be bridged by encouraging teachers to develop personal theories from their research on practice, rather than rely on general theories produced by outside experts on research.

Teachers seem to regain their self-respect as professionals by conducting their own research. Their professional judgement is enhanced by developing an understanding of what they are doing in the classroom, what is wrong and how it might be improved. They feel themselves to be professionals since they are in charge of decision-making in their own classrooms and their perceptions matter.

Since the research is conducted by teachers themselves (not outside experts) on crucial issues suggested by themselves, the data produced are relevant and usable to teachers in their classroom context. The action reflection cycle supports a flexible, unfolding and slow process of research in the classroom, the findings of which can be applied directly to practice.

Thus action research seems to satisfy a major part of the concerns expressed about traditional forms of teacher development: the lack of teachers' commitment, the lack of professionalism and the irrelevant information taken back to classrooms that cannot be applied to solving teaching problems.

2. Due to its experimental-research character and the action reflection cycle, a teacher can slowly research into problems and experiment with solutions at his/her own pace until he/she finds what works. Moreover, the research allows teachers to work towards solutions of problems and not simply recognize their existence.

3. It appears that, action research motivates teachers to improve themselves because it clarifies for them the difference between what they hold as teaching philosophies and what is actually happening in their classrooms. The tragedy of education is that what teachers claim as the educational philosophies that they hold, are irrelevant to their actions in the classroom. Action research suggests, however, that teachers can become aware of this gap and design a plan of action to dis-

cover why it exists and then act to improve on it. I believe that this awareness can be achieved through the systematic questioning of teaching practice by teachers themselves experimenting with various alternatives to discover solutions to discrepancies between their intentions and their achievements.

The teacher is allowed to take on the role of researcher himself/herself and investigate the problems in his/her own unique situation. The problems are investigated and are known to the teacher before the answers can be found. This clarification between problems and their solutions makes it possible to develop clearer strategies for problem-solving. This motivates improvement. The above arguments are illustrated in Figure: 1.7. It describes the way in which I visualized the new alternative as it compared to the current teacher development scheme in Cyprus.

Action Research with Art teachers in Cyprus

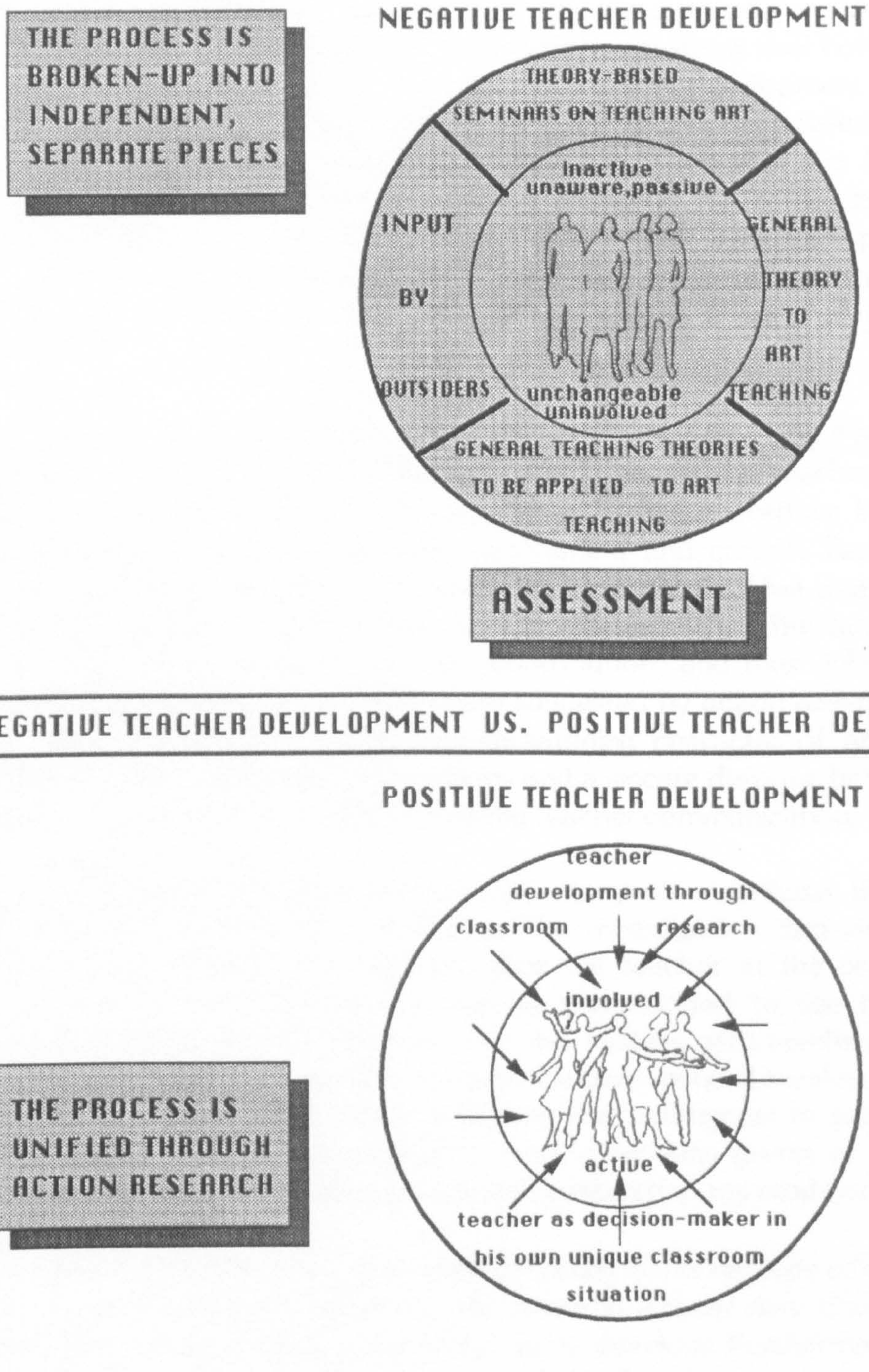
In this final section I intend first to justify my research design by summarizing the main reasons why action research seemed particularly appropriate; and then, finally, to give some specific information about the project as implemented, including the various phases into which the action was divided.

Justification for using action research

My concern was to develop a research design which would answer the following questions: can it deliver good teacher development in a way that might answer my concerns expressed in chapter 1; can I intervene; and as compared to the existing teacher development scheme in Cyprus, can it accommodate my type of research, and finally, can it be used as a tool to challenge the existing teacher development scheme in Cyprus?

Delivers good teacher development: Through reviewing the rationale for action research it became apparent that this is a strategy for teacher development. It presents a strong bond between research and self-motivated improvement in teachers through a non-threatening procedure. A correlation began to emerge between the principles action research fosters and the problems raised in Chapter 1. This evident correlation suggested that action research might be an appropriate alternative to challenge the existing teacher development scheme in Cyprus. Considering the main issues involved in the study and a teacher development scheme in Cyprus based on a system of imposed policies, I felt that a research procedure which allows for self-motivated development in teachers was an appropriate way to proceed.

Figure: 1.7 Negative and positive teacher development



Action research might help answer my concerns: McNiff (1988), defined action research as a process which approaches education as a "unified exercise". Elliott (1991), sees teaching, educational research, curriculum development and evaluation as "integral aspects of an action research process". Action research thus appears to be an integrated approach which can deal with a variety of issues simultaneously. This is useful, since my research questions deal both with teacher development and also its relationship to curriculum development and the management of change. An integrated approach was therefore called for in order to tackle a variety of problems simultaneously. I felt that the flexible procedure of action research would help the issues in the research; minimize the prevailing obstacle of teacher isolation; allow me to work with people, not on people and to seek their support in validating my outcomes (to the system); and finally to seek for a permanent as opposed to a temporary and superficial change in teachers.

Action research might be more acceptable to Cypriot teachers; it allows me to intervene in the Cypriot educational scene: The focus on the teacher makes action research appear as a non-threatening and attractive procedure because it emphasizes direct and active teacher involvement and control. Teachers can take the time to solve their own practical teaching problems. I felt that this might be more acceptable to the teachers in Cyprus since thus far teacher development procedures ignored teacher contribution and thus inhibited teacher growth. Collaboration, a strong element suggested by action research promoters, is a contributing factor to the non-threatening character of action research, allowing for open discussion of problems and a sincere dialogue between teachers sharing common interests, thus promoting teacher communication.

This collaborative potential which invites many to contribute, thus neutralizes the fear and responsibility of failure. The investigation into action research indicated emphatically the need to place the teacher at the center of attention. I sought to follow this throughout and decided to use the bottom-up approach; working with teachers not the system; with teachers and not on teachers. This was a good way to intervene since official involvement would be threatening for Cypriot teachers, inhibiting their willingness to participate in the research project. I therefore needed to form a working group of teachers. I settled upon the form of collaborative action research as my mode of investigation.

The pace in an action research process accommodates my type of research.
In prospect the procedures of action research appear slow and flexible. They allow time for examining the process as it develops. Furthermore, this flexibility would allow for my role to shift from being first the initiator and then later a participant in the process. It would give teachers comfortable maturing time to develop. The procedures and cycles available through action research allow the teacher time to structure a flexible research process in examining closely his/her classroom problems with the purpose of improving them. Action research procedures seem to provide for the comfortable study of the realistic classroom activity which is spontaneous, unpredictable and unstable.

Assumptions compared - Action research as a tool to challenge existing teacher development in Cyprus: The following comparison will clarify the difference between the ineffectiveness of the current teacher development programs in Cyprus, with a more suitable alternative brought to light through the image of action research seeking to show that action research can be used as a tool to challenge the existing teacher development scheme in Cyprus. Examining some of the alternatives, the negative components of the existing scheme of teacher development in Cyprus became steadily clearer with reference to particular aspects as set out below:

Existing teacher development relating to :

- Teacher role: The teacher is not involved in his/her own learning, evaluation nor curriculum development. She/he is a passive receiver of ideas.
- Classroom : There is no regard for the realities of classroom activity nor to the unique character of one.
- Curriculum : It does not relate to curriculum planning, assessment nor is it involved in explaining its process of implementation.
- Problem-solving: It does not relate to the solution of real problems in the classroom.
- Communication: There is no encouragement of communication between teachers, teachers and students nor teachers and inspector. Also there is no constructive dialogue going-on between teachers of the different disciplines. Each is isolated in his/her own fenced-out territory.
- Student role: the student is not involved in any learning or evaluation procedures that relate to him/her. The student is never asked to give feedback on any teaching nor evaluation procedures.
- Theory versus practice: An "unhealthy" relationship is created, since the teacher is asked to implement irrelevant and general theories to classroom practice.

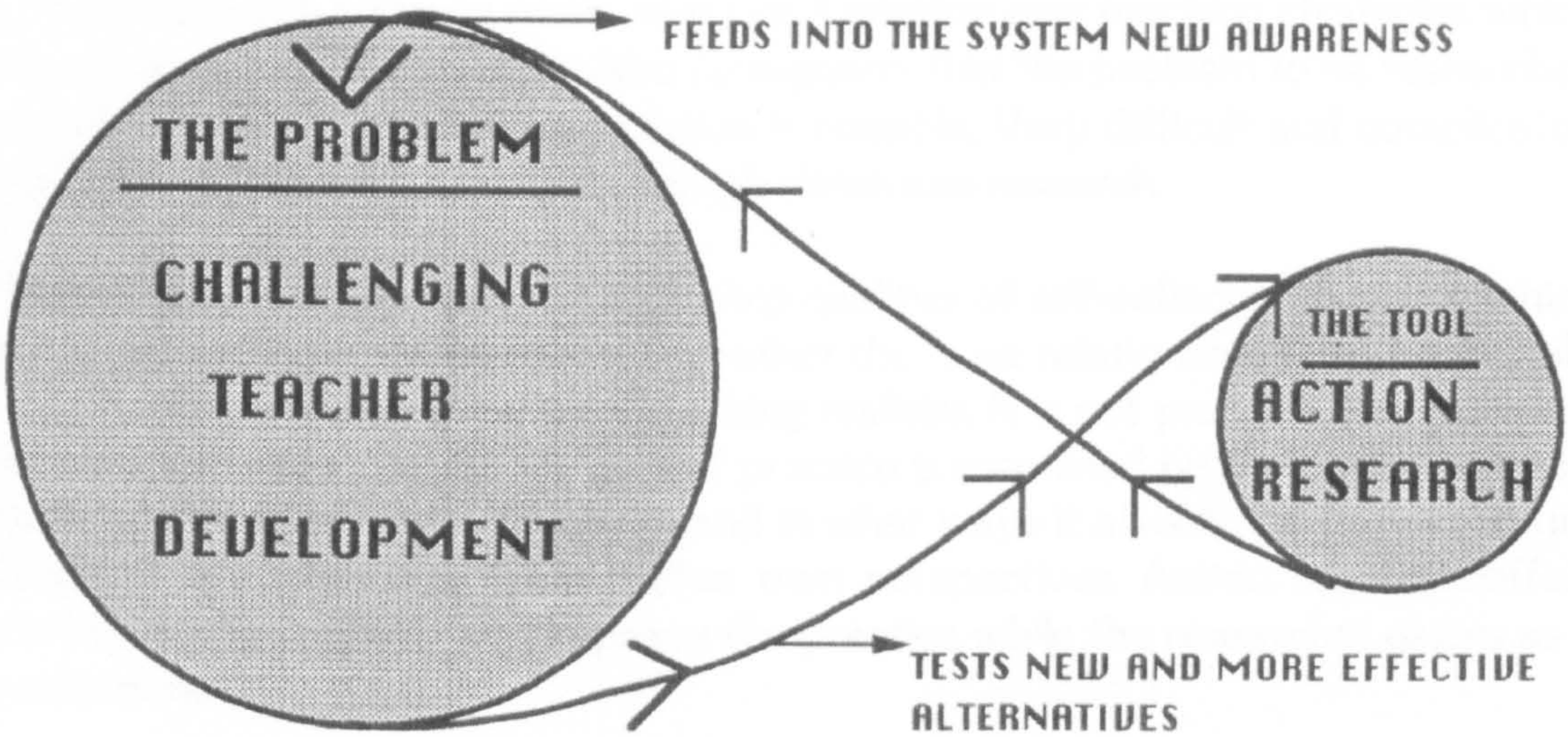
Action research, as the alternative, seems to offer more adequate possibilities:

- Teacher role: The teacher is the center of attention and decision-maker. He/she develops awareness of her own teaching effectiveness through critical, reflective thinking on practice.
- Classroom : The teacher looks "in" her classroom reality and investigates "closely" classroom activity towards the improvement of teaching practice.
- Curriculum: It challenges the implementation of the written curriculum against its effectiveness in practice. The teacher can develop his/her own curriculum.
- Problem-solving: Through the close investigation involved in classroom research, the teacher is able to define and solve relevant problems existing in his/her situation.
- Communication: Classroom research is based on collaboration among teachers in seeking support to problem-solving for the improvement of teaching.
- Student role: The student becomes involved in his own learning evaluation and classroom problem-solving.

- Theory versus practice: Classroom research creates theory out of practice through the experimental investigation and solution to problems relevant to unique classroom situations.

Figure: 1.8 attempts to clarify the impact of comparisons that the study seeks to achieve between the current teacher development scheme and an alternative which is represented by the methodology of action research. Assumptions tend to clarify the appropriateness of action research.

Figure: 1.8 Impact of comparisons



Based on the comparison between action research and the existing teacher development programs it was indicated that the schemes in Cyprus are limited in the way they:

- involve teachers;
- treat teachers;
- consider teachers' views

The previous section has sought to justify the choice of action research. It has been argued that action research is a type of inquiry which seems to accommodate new meanings within teacher development; it satisfies my concerns and suggests ways in which it would be possible to intervene in my system; it implies development not merely training; stimulates curriculum awareness; it implies change; suggests collaboration (group work). It will be used as a tool to challenge the existing teacher development schemes in Cyprus and examine processes of effective teacher development. Even though, collaborative action research was selected as a suitable methodology for this study, the value of its adequacy will be re-examined after the experience (in the concluding chapters), as well as the appropriateness of the suggested action reflection cycle.

McNiff (1988) cites some cases where action research might not be the answer to an educational problem "...such as issues based on statistical analyses or comparative studies, where human unpredictability is not the issue, or where a straightforward comparison between introductory and control situations is required....For enquiries that rest on a hard-nosed analysis of data, however, action research is inappropriate" (p. 7). Hopkins (1985) cites some concerns in implementing classroom research regarding issues relating to finding time in the regular teaching schedule and making proper decisions for data-collecting techniques. Also he expresses a concern about using a reliable methodology to formulate hypotheses and to develop strategies which apply to teachers' unique classroom situations. He comments that traditional researchers do not respect action research as a valid form of research because many who use it employ new teaching strategies which are not based on reliable data. Also he suggests that the problem to be researched must be a real problem whose solution is possible. Very difficult and complicated problems should not be tackled through classroom research.

Finally, it was not so much the appealing qualities of self-reflective practice which attracted me to action research, but rather the close relationship that these qualities exhibited regarding my own teaching realities. It is not practice that is important but the ways through which that practice is examined by the person actively involved in that practice (teaching) and in what ways it affects the person; to understand one's teaching from his/her own perspectives. Action research offers procedures to examine and improve the practice while the researcher grows as a professional.

The Project as Implemented

In the early chapters I posed three questions that I felt needed answering before I could proceed with my plans. These were:

- knowing how to ask the teachers certain questions;
- daring to ask the questions;
- knowing what to do with the answers and where to direct them in order to achieve my objectives.

At this stage it became possible to discover answers to those questions. The questions needed to be asked in a way that they were not threatening to the teachers. Daring to ask the questions became less frightening for me because I would invite the participants to be innovators not just implementers of an innovation. They would be part of the decision-making that would form the innovation. As far as the third question goes, I decided to proceed in the spirit of action research: further decisions would grow out of earlier activities.

The next problem was to determine the tasks involved and the order in which they should be tackled. I decided that the first step should be to identify the structure of the research. Since I needed to deal with the persistent problem of teacher isolation in approaching teachers in introducing the innovations of action research, in collaborative work and finally forming and managing a group

of teachers, I felt that a three-phase strategy would be an appropriate course of action. This would provide for a flexible and developmental process.

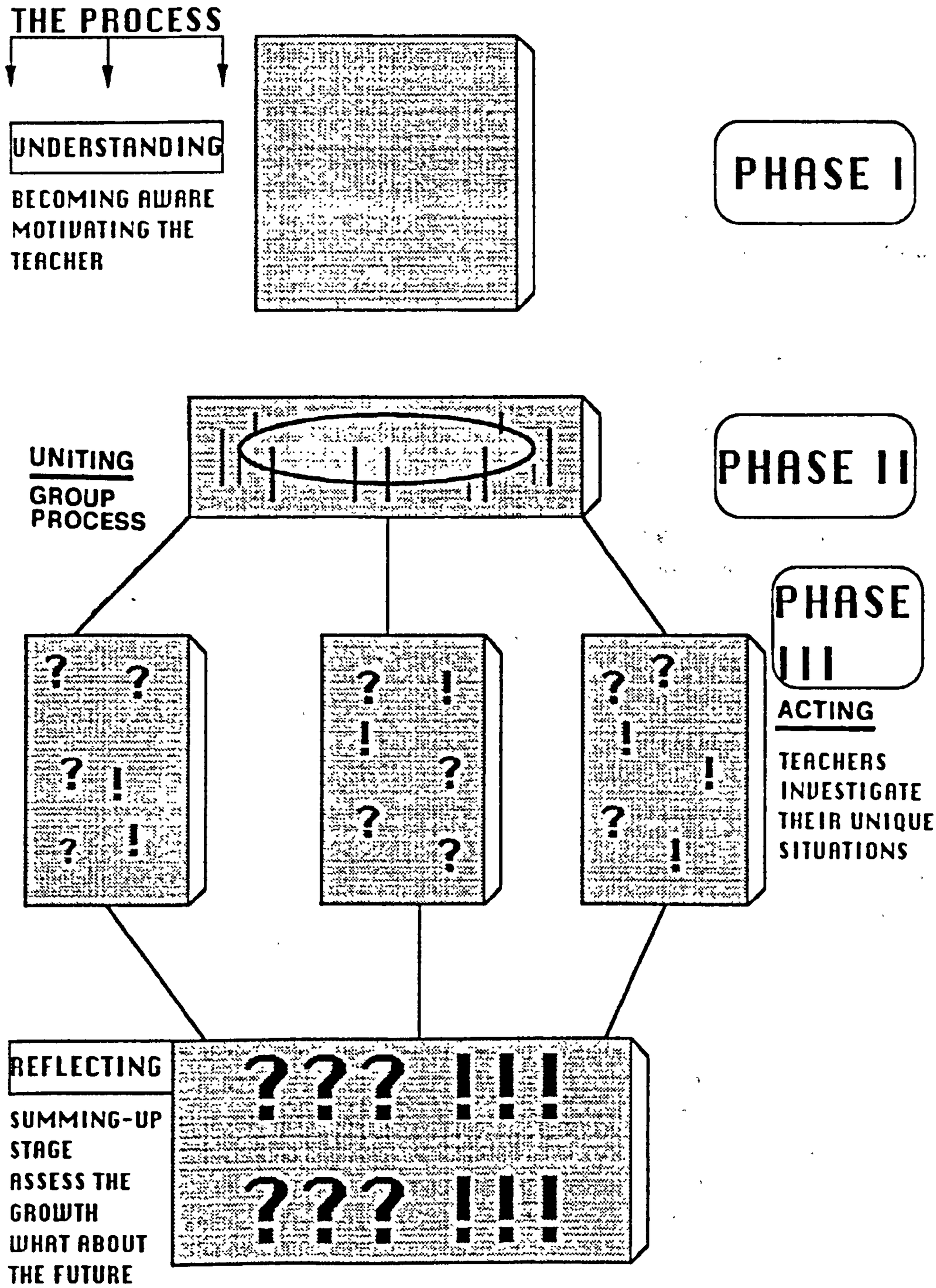
I decided to deal with the problems of approaching teachers in Phase I. This would lead into Phase II where an attempt would be made to bring the participants together as a coherent working unit. Finally the task for Phase III, would be to manage group work while conducting action research in classrooms. The phases were not planned to be equal in length nor content. Each would depend on input from the previous phase for shaping, redirecting and clarifying its structure, directions and objectives. In summary, the first phase was devoted to understanding, the second phase to uniting and the third phase to acting and reflecting. This is illustrated in Figure: 1.9.

Questions concerning my own role had to be confronted. Should I merely pose as a change facilitator and help teachers through the change process? Should I participate in the group work? Should I merely observe and collect data and what types of data-collecting techniques would be more acceptable in the educational scene in Cyprus? I decided that I needed to accommodate all three roles through role-shifting. In phase I, I planned to assume the role of the initiator who was acquainted with art teachers' problems and wished to introduce new ways of solving those problems. In phase II, I would combine the role of the initiator with that of change-facilitator and participant. In phase III, when the major activity in classroom research would take place, I would act as a participant in classroom research as well as a participant-observer to the entire group activity.

Since this approach presented a challenge to the established way of doing things in Cyprus, questions of ethics regarding confidentiality and anonymity of the group were discussed. Teachers expressed their fear of any official involvement especially the inspector's. In Cyprus the inspector is considered the only authority on all issues concerning his or her subject. This clearly inhibits any teacher initiative. They felt that any official involvement would threaten their efforts. I made it clear to the participants that this was to be a long term commitment on their part. They were informed of the type of study to be undertaken and its duration.

Further questions arose concerning data collection. This would clearly involve a variety of methods since the entire endeavor dealt with a complicated set of activities: introducing innovations; managing group work; monitoring classroom research; and managing and examining the process of change and the growth of teachers through the chosen methodology of action research. Each phase would involve different objectives; confront different obstacles; use a different approach and different methods of collecting data.

Figure: 1.9 The Three Phases



Phase I involved the search for willing art teachers. The purpose of this phase was to bring the innovation to the attention of the teacher, to make her aware of the meaning, process and principles of the innovation; and to get

her motivated towards a new way of working. The aim was to give time to the teacher to understand how this project would work for her within her own classroom. Two issues were my main concern at this stage. The first issue was to get teachers to listen to me and the second was to introduce action research in a way that teachers in Cyprus would be able to comprehend and be attracted to as a possible means of tackling problems within their teaching.

During this initial crucial contact with teachers, I was confronted with a set of problems. These included teacher isolation, obstacles within the system itself, lack of teacher self-esteem, and suspicion about any innovation. As a result, I decided to approach teachers privately in their own homes, selecting the procedure of semi-structured interviews as the most appropriate one. For this crucial initial contact, I settled upon seven questions in an open-ended questionnaire. Eleven private interviews took place. As a result I selected six teachers as the final participants. The initial private interviews were taped, fieldnotes and photographs were taken. The six teachers chosen were encouraged to embark upon some individual enquiries. Many pieces of student artwork were collected as well as student questionnaires (some borrowed from books and some designed by the teachers themselves) as part of this preliminary work.

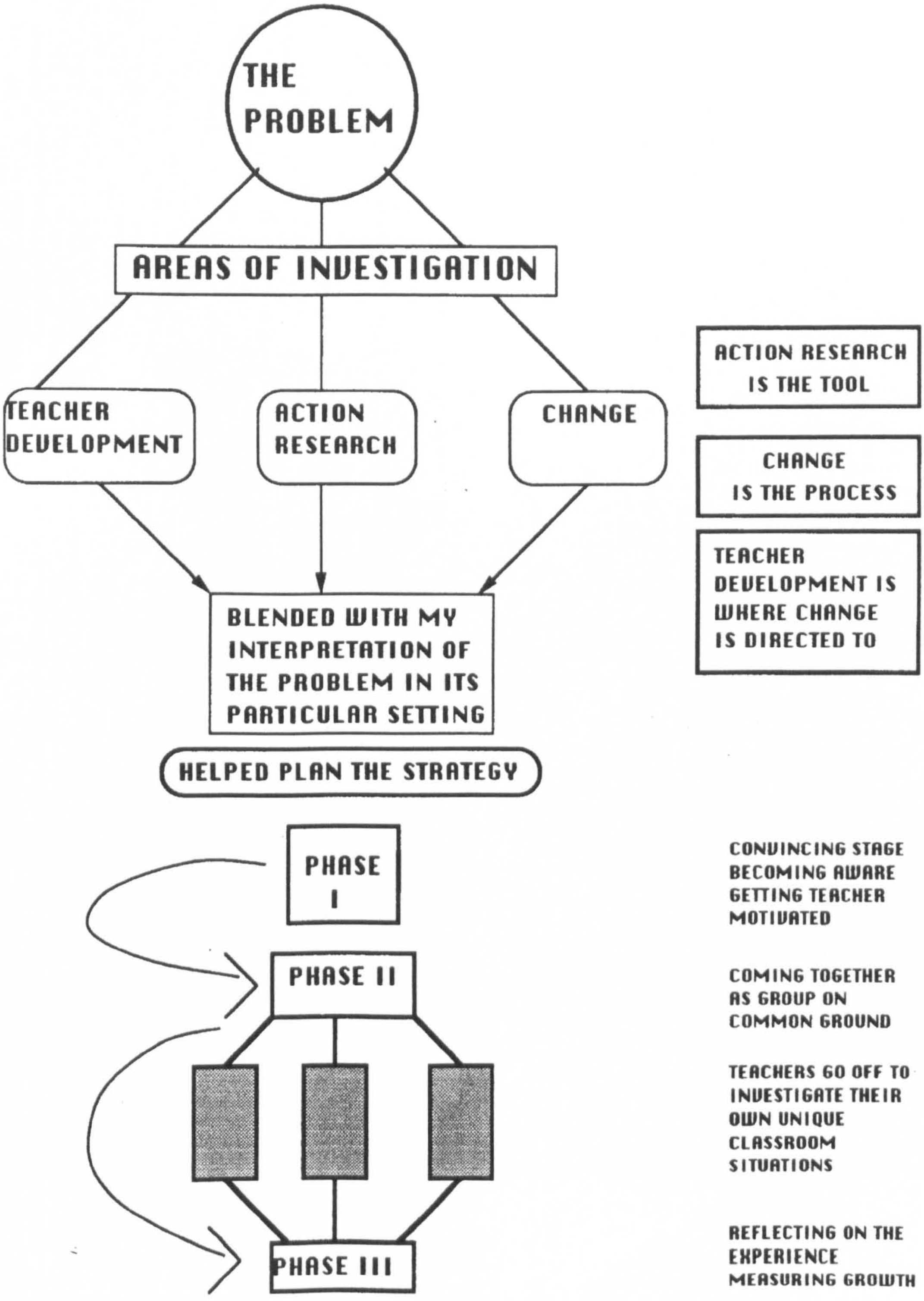
Phase II involved the long process of forming a coherent working group. Considering the lack of collaborative work among teachers in Cyprus, a preliminary stage was built into the collaborative effort. Teachers were approached and privately supplied with written information. They were given time to comprehend the action research approach and the collaboration it involves on their own terms and at their own pace. Twenty-four private interviews took place followed by two joint sessions, which signaled the formation of a coherent working group. Fieldnotes and photographs were taken of meetings and classrooms.

Phase III involved two tasks: a) the process of group work which led to the formation of a common task and the major activity in classrooms using action research procedures; and b) the summing-up of the entire experience for the participants. The group members were given time for reflecting on the experience of action research. Each teacher was asked to assess its impact on her as a person and as a professional. Through open group discussion, each teacher evaluated how much growth has taken place in her own awareness of classroom activity and teaching effectiveness. How did each individual teacher interpret her experience and how would it be used in the future? Each teacher measured her own growth through reflection, evaluating outcomes and talking about permanent changes in her own teaching effectiveness. During this phase, many private, small (2-3 persons) and joint meetings of the group participants took place.

The teachers used fieldnotes on classroom research, took photographs of classroom activity, collected many student-questionnaires and much student artworks as feedback about their new teaching strategies.

I transcribed interviews from tapes and notes that I took. The teachers had a chance to hear and confirm what they said. Teachers were asked about the accuracy of my records by being allowed to see the notes or discuss them through telephone conversations.

Figure: 1.10 The planning of the study



In this chapter I have endeavoured to describe both the theory and practice of action research in order to demonstrate the origins of my research design. I then set out the activities undertaken and the way in which they developed over time. In the following chapters, I set out to describe the intervention itself. Figure: 1.10 seeks to illustrate the entire planning of the study.

PART 2

THE NATURE OF MY INTERVENTION

Chapter **4**

Phase I
Initial Understanding of the Issues

The main task of phase I, was the search for willing participants. This task was achieved in three stages: approaching teachers (initial contact); introducing the innovation of action research; and motivating the participants to try out the new way of working during a trial stage in order to assess in what ways it related to their own classroom reality.

The entire activity of Phase I (January, 1, 93 - July, 28, 93) will be reported on in three stages:

Stage A: Approaching and Questioning the Teachers - Searching for Participants (January, 1, 93 - March, 23, 93)
Stage B: Introducing the Innovation (action research) (April, 4, 93 - April, 28, 93)
Stage C: Getting Teacher Feedback from Trial Stage (May, 4, 93 - July, 27, 93)

Stage A: Approaching and Questioning the Teachers - Searching for Participants

At this initial stage, I was faced with a double predicament; getting teachers to listen and convincing them that action research might offer better alternatives to their teaching problems. This initial contact with the art teachers was crucial. The possibility that the teachers approached might find this new suggestion annoying or disturbing was an inhibiting and threatening factor to my efforts. Therefore, in order to ensure a better outcome, I needed to consider the type of relationship that I would establish with these teachers. In my attempt to approach the teachers at this initial stage, I developed the following concerns:

1. establishing a role for myself that was non-threatening to the teachers;
2. convincing the teacher that this particular innovation (action research) was worth her attention;
3. convincing the teacher that I am not interfering in her classroom business;
4. establishing a relationship of mutual trust and understanding with the teacher right through this initial stage;
5. convincing the teacher that she is the center of attention and decision-maker in this project.

In order to satisfy my concerns, I proceeded by approaching teachers individually on a personal friendly note. I presented myself as a colleague who had come up with a good idea for improving teaching effectiveness in the subject of art and was seeking the valuable support of her fellow teachers in this endeavor. The initial contact with each art teacher was assisted through a set of open-ended questions which focused on the following objectives:

- getting each teacher to talk about the issues;
- finding out how aware she is of her own teaching;
- how she reacts to problems in class;
- how she perceives her own particular classroom reality;
- how the teacher interprets her own teaching effectiveness and the need for improvement.

I was further helped to clarify my objectives for this initial contact through references. Fullan (1991) cautions the innovator against being too committed to a certain change. "Being deeply committed to a particular change in itself provides no guidelines for attaining the change, and may blind us to the realities of others that would be necessary for transforming and implementing the change effectively" (p. 102). "The major initial stance should involve *critical assessment* of whether the change is desirable in relation to certain goals and whether it is "implementable" - in brief, whether it is worth the effort, because it will be an effort if it is at all worthwhile. Several criteria would be applied: Does the change address an unmet need? Is it a priority in relation to other unmet needs?" (Fullan, 1991, p.103).

Recognizing the need for teachers to be awakened to their teaching by expressing their views on the issues involved, a questionnaire seemed best suited for this initial contact. It was devised as a framework for the initial interview. It would further show that the effort was organized and the issues related directly to the business of teaching and its problems. Furthermore, it would assist the teachers in organizing their thoughts during the semi-structured interview. At this stage I was clearly seeking to establish (through the questioning) the teacher's own reality, and simultaneously assess whether an innovation such as action research (that I was going to suggest at a later stage) would be seen as a priority (or an acceptable way of working) by the practitioners themselves.

An initial assessment of the situation and teachers' interpretations were needed to be considered because "...educational change is a process of coming to grips with the *multiple* realities of people, who are the main participants in implementing change" (Fullan, 1991, p. 95). Moreover, "innovators need to be open to the realities of others: sometimes because the ideas of others will lead to alterations for the better in the direction of change, and sometimes because the others' realities will expose the problems of implementation that must be addressed..." (Fullan, 1991, p. 96). "Change will be most successful when its support is geared to the diagnosed needs of the individual users" (Hord, Ruther-

ford, Austin and Hall, 1987, p. 6). "In other words, their interpretation of what the change means for them influences what they subsequently do and how they do it" (Sikes in Fullan and Hargreaves, eds., 1992, p. 38). I was seeking to establish the significance of this importance (teachers' views on change) through the initial private interviews.

Considering the objectives, I settled upon four areas of questioning:

- improvement on a teacher's practice;
- problems in the teaching of art;
- effective evaluation of one's teaching;
- self-limitations in teaching practice.

The following questionnaire (Data: 1.1) based on the above areas of questioning, was used as the basis for a semi-structured interview.

Data: 1.1 Initial Teacher questionnaire

General:

Where does improvement on art teaching come from?

1. From reading books on general pedagogy or art education pedagogy?
2. From seminars at the Pedagogical Institute?
3. From the teachers themselves who are critical of their own teaching problems and limitations and try to solve problems from within the classroom?
4. From other teachers teaching the same subjects?
5. From student reactions and comments?
6. From general theory on pedagogy or from practical experience?

Who is responsible for problems in the teaching of art?

1. The system in general which allows only for limited time for art in school, too many students in each classroom and so on?
2. The students themselves and their limited background?
3. Limitations in the teacher herself?

Where does the most effective evaluation of one's own art teaching capacities and effectiveness come from?

1. From the inspector?
2. From students?
3. From other teachers?
4. From the teacher herself?

Personal:

1. How often do you present something new to your students; such as a new approach of presenting an old idea? Is this important, i.e. refreshing one's own teaching?
2. How do you handle problems in learning in your own students?
3. Do all students become involved in learning or just a few talented ones?

The questionnaire was not sent out to the teachers before the interview. This would have appeared impersonal. They would not respond to the questionnaire. I was aiming at a more personal contact which would have allowed them

to elaborate on the issues and emphasize the ones that concerned them the most. It had served as a basis for discussion.

Ten art teachers were approached individually. Only four were slightly acquainted with me. However we had never embarked on a project together nor worked as colleagues at the same school. Their faces and names were familiar to me from the inspector's seminars. We had never talked seriously about what concerns us regarding our profession. I had contacted the four people by calling them at home or at their school. The other six teachers I had contacted through a third party. Ten semi-structured interviews were transacted which took place from January, 1, 93 - March, 23, 93. There was one interview with each teacher approached. For this initial contact there was no need for more interviews with each teacher. The main objective was to establish the willingness of teachers to be involved.

The teachers contacted were willing to see me and talk to me. Their initial reaction to my call was an urge of curiosity to learn something new. At this stage I felt that the willingness exhibited by teachers to talk to me might be attributed to my role as a colleague acquainted with the problems of their profession.

The initial interviews were taped. I was concerned about my role as an interviewer. The taped interviews gave me the opportunity to listen to myself in relationship to the interviewees. This would show weaknesses in my skills as an interviewer. Listening to the early taped interviews I discovered that I tended to talk more and listen less. This allowed me to become aware of the problem. I remedied the situation by giving more control of the interview to the teacher and allowing her to elaborate her thoughts.

Walker and Adelman's (1975) pointers on interviewing students were helpful in interviewing teachers. Some of the most useful passages follow: "Be as encouraging, reassuring and supportive as possible without influencing or biasing the content of what the student is saying.

a. Be a *sympathetic*, *interested* and *attentive* listener, without taking an active conservative role; this is a way of conveying that you value and appreciate the child's opinion.
b. Be *neutral* with respect to subject matter. Do not express your own opinions...on the subjects being discussed...
c. Your own sense of ease is also important...." (p. 140).

The discussion allowed the teacher to bring out the issues that were more important to her. The open dialogue with the teacher allowed some very important elements to surface: finding out how aware she is of her own teaching, how she reacts to problems in class, whether she is aware of her own limitations and how she feels about them. The ultimate objective of the questioning was to discover willing and open-minded teachers to form a group for testing the pos-

sibilities of classroom research. The notes below summarize the comments made during these ten interviews in response to my questions.

Where does improvement on art teaching come from?

Soula: Interchanging with other colleagues helps one improve one's teaching. Seminars are mostly helpful when based on real conditions that concern art in Cyprus. Books are too theoretical, irrelevant, based on completely different conditions and facilities which other countries have. It is extremely difficult to apply them to art teaching in Cyprus.

Tasia: Art teaching improvement comes from the teacher herself. She should be an open-minded person and not to hide behind a screen of isolation. I like to listen to new ideas and try them out. If one suggests a new idea that sounds good, why not try it? A teacher should try out new ideas and test their effectiveness and not reject them before they are even tried out; experiment with ideas.

Carol: I am bored with my own ideas. I need feedback from other teachers. Improvement on art teaching comes from the teacher herself by experimenting in the classroom and finding out what works and what does not. Each class has a different atmosphere. I experiment to see what works; if it doesn't, I cross it off the list. I use an art educational journal from the United States to get ideas from, but it doesn't help. It's not what I'm dealing with here in Cyprus.

Sophia P.: No pedagogical courses have helped me to improve my class teaching. Sometimes I do find ideas from other teachers if they are nice and collaborative. It does not happen often though.

Niki: I learn through my own experience in classroom teaching and from other colleagues' experiences. I ask my colleagues how they handle certain problems in the art room when I am faced with a difficult situation. Experimentation is the better way, more correct. Each one of us is faced with a unique situation. Some teachers don't even have an art room to go to. Outside theory might help as a start, but not completely. Practical experience will tell you how it really works.

Tasoula: We should work together to solve practical problems we are faced with every day in the art class.

Xenia: The teacher learns from her own experience in the classroom.

Sophia H.: Pedagogical courses have not helped me to be more effective in my teaching, but my personal experience in classroom teaching. I learned nothing from the Pedagogical Academy that could help me, prepare me for art in the elementary school. I started from scratch and learn as I go, from my own experience in classroom teaching and solving every-day problems.

Rea: Improvement in art teaching comes from experimenting and finding out on your own what works.

These and other responses seemed to indicate that these teachers do learn from their own practical experience by exploring solutions to problems they encounter in their classrooms every day. They do not emphasize theory learning as an effective source for teaching improvement, but instead they emphasize the uniqueness of each classroom through the unique treatment of problems for each group of students. They do not believe that a general approach of teaching can be applied to all students. Also the uniqueness in art teaching in Cyprus is emphasized. The current teacher development scheme often emphasizes general approaches to improvement of teaching and approaches that are brought in from other countries which apply to a different context. Seminars introduce strategies that are general and irrelevant to the unique situation that the teacher is faced with in Cyprus.

These comments seem to indicate that there is a strong necessity for a new way of addressing teaching problems in unique classrooms within a specific context.

Who is responsible for problems in the teaching of art?

Tasoula: The system is responsible for problems in the teaching of art. We get very limited resources, limited materials and of bad quality. They don't give us enough teaching time. Also no time is given to us to visit museums and art galleries. I can't implement the art curriculum. It's very confusing. They sent it to us without telling us anything about it, without giving us any directions, without asking us about it. I don't understand the art curriculum at all. I don't understand the order of the lessons. They start from the first grade of elementary school. We all know that it is not implemented in the primary schools. The students come from elementary schools to secondary education unprepared and lost. We have to start from the beginning. I always know the basic rules for art teaching which students need to learn; what tools and materials to use. I use all these in conjunction with the work-book (this is referred to in Chapter 1) that you wrote for junior high schools. None of the curricula in education are implementable. All teachers just do what they think is best. Our time is very limited and the curricula cannot be implemented within the time provided.

Tasia: Only five or six students are interested in becoming artists out of thirty-five. We try very hard to bring out from the students something of essence. This is only accomplished through our hard effort and love for the children. If you let them be free, they will do absolutely nothing on their own. Parents are always complaining about the low grades I give their children. They don't think that art should be taken seriously. All children should get A's. Parents don't see the need for developing evaluation criteria for the art lesson.

Carol: No matter how I try, I can't get all students involved in doing some sort of art work. They are so many and of such different levels. I don't

have enough time to get to all of them. I'm on my feet all day. I'm completely exhausted by the end of the day.
Niki: Students have not learned to observe...and also...something else...they can't concentrate for a long period of time.
Soula: Students and their background are the product of a political and social system which is not oriented to the needs of humans who are independent, interesting, creative, kind, giving, optimistic, active, etc., but on the need to be taught most lessons in a sterile way in an unimaginative, unattractive environment with no real stimulation, motive or participation in changing all these.
Sophia H.: There is an art curriculum for art in the elementary, but I don't understand what it says. It's very complicated and not applicable to children of that age. They tell us at the in-service training courses we attend that the curriculum is not something that the individual teachers can handle. They tell us that we are not well equipped to offer opinions and handle the building of a new curriculum. We should leave that to the policy-makers. We keep telling them that based on our practical experience the curriculum does not work...it is useless.

The above information and comments from interviewees brought into focus the difficulties encountered by the art teachers in their teaching endeavors. These difficulties range from poor facilities and limited time to problems created by negative attitudes towards the importance of art as a school subject, by the educational system, by parents and by students. The above comments also reinforce the critique of the art curriculum which I have already proposed in Chapter 1. It becomes evident that the art curriculum does not consider the real needs of students and teachers nor the context within which it will be implemented. These create problems in art teaching The teacher is just a passive implementor; neither a participant nor a decision-maker in the design of the art curriculum.

Personal:

Niki: I ask other colleagues how they handle problems in class. A teacher needs to be up to date, refreshing her ideas often enough. It's important to give something new to your students.
Tasia: I'm bored with my own ideas. I need feedback from other teachers.
Rea: I approach students differently according to student level.
Niki: I behave differently in each classroom. My reactions vary.
Tasia: I approach students in different ways according to their level of understanding.

The question "Where does the most effective evaluation of one's own art teaching capacities and effectiveness come from?" was not given importance by the teachers interviewed. They tended to center their comments on the first two questions.

Certain elements seemed to come through teachers' discussion of the issues. Seminars only help when they relate to art teaching in Cyprus. Practical experience helps the teacher improve her own practice. Uniqueness in approaching problems in classroom teaching is called for. Collaboration is suggested as a remedy to isolation. The teacher needs to try new approaches in her teaching in order to prevent boredom.

Through the private interviews it became apparent that classroom research would be an acceptable innovation to these teachers. At this initial stage they seemed willing to take on the challenge for the sake of renewing themselves and learning to solve problems by looking at their own unique situation. Through questioning and the personal contact, attaching importance to their views and displaying a willingness to listen to them, had produced interesting and revealing comments. Seven of the art teachers seemed to present encouraging possibilities for becoming participants in an action research experience as a group.

In the end six teachers agreed to participate. The decision for the final selection was based on the following criteria: open-mindness, willingness to change, strong urge to try new things, a readiness to admit to problems and limitations, and easy access to their homes; making meetings easier. The notes below give some indication of the training and background of each of these six teachers; and in Color Plate: 1.1 three of the selected teachers can be seen at work in their classrooms. At the top Niki is seen in her senior high school art room, left below Tasoula is teaching in her junior high school art class, and right below Sophia H. is seen with her senior high school elective art class.

Carol: She studied art education in England, specializing in art and design. She taught for two years in Wales. She is presently teaching art at the American Academy where she had been for five years as this project began. She was particularly keen to feel less isolated and to collaborate with another art teacher. She was seeking support in getting new ideas and assessing old ones. She was critical of her own teaching and was bored with her own teaching ideas. She wanted to try other peoples' ideas and to see how they work. She found the questioning very relevant. She offered a lot of input and had a lot to say on the issues. Above all she was relieved to get support in solving her problems in the art room.

Tasoula: She studied fine arts in Paris. She had no training in educational courses. She had taught for seven years in public schools. She was still an art teacher in secondary schools. She felt that art teachers do not communicate enough. She was willing to learn new things. "The teachers I work with", she said, "hide their students' art work so I don't see what they are teaching them. They are afraid that I might steal their ideas". She believed in communication between art teachers rather than isolation. She

was very excited that another art teacher was asking her to work openly with her on new ideas. She believed in experimenting and finding which ideas are more effective. She said that theory learning and inspector's visits were of no value whatsoever. She believed in learning from practical experience.

Tasia: She studied interior decorating in England. She had had no training in educational courses. She had taught for seventeen years in public schools. She found the projected activities very interesting. She was quite willing to talk to me and to take advantage of the "new" knowledge I was offering. She believed that problems did exist; in fact, lots of them. She believed in experimenting with new ideas, trying out other people's ideas and also listening to colleague's criticism on her work. She was anxious to get started and she named problems that we might attack.

Sophia P.: She studied interior decorating in England. She had no training in educational courses. She had taught in secondary education for nineteen years. She believed in trying out new ideas and learning from them. She said that she tried to handle problems in class instead of ignoring them. She found my questioning relevant. She liked to "renew" her teaching.

Niki: She studied technical drawing in England and she also had no training in educational courses. She had taught for seventeen years in secondary schools. She believed that improvement in art teaching comes from a teacher's own practical experience and from other colleagues' experiences. She claimed to behave differently in each classroom depending on the character of the students. She also tried to handle problems in class; rather than turn away from them. She believed that theory learning might help one get started but practical experience would show how things really work. She believes that the teacher must be well prepared before going into the classroom to teach. She loved to experiment with ideas. She liked to ask other people how they deal with difficult situations in the art room. She was very willing to take part in new procedures such as classroom research. She said she would try it because it was new and she wanted to learn new things and refresh her own teaching.

Sophia H.: She is a young elementary school teacher whose ambition was to major in art. She graduated from the Pedagogical Academy in Cyprus which provided a three-year training for teachers of elementary education. She felt that she did not get enough training in teaching art to elementary students at the Pedagogical Academy to help her implement her ideas in class. She felt completely lost and she wanted to improve herself. She wanted to start experimenting with her art classes at the elementary level. She was very critical of her own teaching and welcomed outside support and new knowledge.

Thus the final group members were selected. The ages, teaching experience and art training of these teachers varied. They came from primary, junior and senior high schools and American Academy. Despite their variability, they all exhibited enthusiasm and willingness to work towards change. Discovering this, I moved on to the next stage of Phase I.

Stage B: Introducing the Innovation (action research)

This was still a very crucial period. There was a need to inform the participants of the innovation and what exactly it involved. Even though stage A, revealed that these selected practitioners were willing to try new ideas, my main concern at this stage was to estimate the acceptance of the particular innovation, action research, and teacher willingness to commit themselves in the project for a continuous period of time. A new concern developed at this stage: how to approach the introduction of the innovation in a way that would appear acceptable to teachers.

Fullan (1991) has suggested that during a process of introducing an innovation, the implementers' interpretations and attitudes can get in the way. The innovator must take this into consideration and allow the teachers to develop their own understanding of the new idea; be open to their realities. "Do not assume that your version of what the change should be is the one that should or could be implemented. On the contrary, assume that one of the main purposes of the process of implementation is to *exchange your reality* of what should be through interaction with implementers and others concerned" (p. 105). "Assume that any significant innovation, if it is to result in change, requires individual implementers to work out their own meaning" (p. 106).

My main task was to introduce the principles of action research and the process of its implementation to each individual teacher separately. To this end, each participant was presented with a written note specified as Document: 2.1 (set out below) to read. At this stage, the innovation was introduced as a new way of solving problems. A sequence of actions was described relating to a specific problem experienced by many art teachers in Cyprus in order to make it directly and immediately relevant. The sequence of actions related to the action research model suggested for this study in the Methodology chapter.

Document: 2.1 Classroom research: the process explained through a teaching problem

THE PROBLEM: I am concerned about my students not getting enough working time in the art class - only 45 minutes each week. This creates problems in finishing-up work in time for grading, not putting artistic quality into the work, not getting enough time to understand what they are doing.

WHY DOES IT EXIST ? : Ask questions about the problem: why does it exist? Ask questions about possible solutions and getting students involved in coming up with solutions.
POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD: Can I improvise for more working time by helping the students to work independently and at their own pace, not depending on classroom time?
DESIGN OF STRATEGY: I design a self-explanatory syllabus specifying assignments, artistic problems to work on, giving a lot of choices to students, and useful references. Students are asked to comment on the syllabus, make choices, modifications, suggestions. They design their own working schedule.
PUTTING THE PLAN INTO ACTION: The plan is put into action. Students use the syllabus to work out their own working schedule. This new activity is monitored for two terms.
COLLECTING DATA AND ANALYZING IT: Art data are gathered based on systematic observation of classroom activity and note-taking of developments in student work. Reflect on the data and re-plan.

Each teacher was given the time and the opportunity to discuss and offer opinions and modifications on the written material during the interview. Each was even motivated to raise questions on issues she did not quite understand in reference to this new way of addressing a classroom problem.

The notes were explained to the teacher. She read them carefully and discussed them in relation to her own "reality" in the art room and how they might relate to her own student culture. The teacher had the notes to reflect on and respond to constructively by thinking of ways that they might work in her own context. The discussion followed right through 4 - 5 private sessions with each teacher individually. The participants were asked to suggest other problems they encountered in their own classrooms. They were then asked to consider how the action reflection cycle of classroom research (suggested above) might be used to tackle them.

Notes on data-collecting techniques were also given to the teachers to look at, to discuss and to reflect on their application in their classrooms. The teachers discussed the possibilities of taking fieldnotes, photographs, interviewing and discussing with their students, designing student feedback techniques such as questionnaires, and writing case studies.

It is perhaps worth noting that the activity during this period was carried out on an individual basis for the purpose of developing awareness. Due to the problem of prolonged teacher isolation it seemed appropriate to take time in order for the teachers to develop a certain degree of self-confidence in expressing their ideas and in knowing that their ideas were valued. At this stage they were clearly experiencing innovation in the form of teacher-acceptance since for once someone was seeking their perceptions on the various issues. The objective was to allow each teacher to reflect on action research procedures as

they relate to her own working conditions and teaching methods at her own pace.

Right through the discussions, the focus was on how the teacher herself was interpreting the material relating to the innovation. I was not promoting one way of getting things right because "...strong commitment to a particular change may be a barrier to setting up an effective process of change,...vision by itself may get in the way if it results in impatience, failure to listen, etc." (Fullan, 1991, p. 95).

Despite the frequent individual contacts, however, there was still a feeling of scepticism on the part of the participants. The message that was coming through was that this innovative idea for solving problems certainly sounded good, but would it work in practice and will anyone help them? It was all quite new to them. All of the participants expressed a willingness to learn and try-out new ways of dealing with classroom problems, but they were still unsure about the likely success in practice. They were also still sceptical about their own role in the process. The question persisted: "Am I really essential in this"? Therefore, in order to alleviate any feelings of ambiguity and insecurity existing during this time, a trial stage was built-in with the purpose of giving time to the teachers to acquaint themselves with some classroom research procedures through practice.

Stage C: Getting Teacher Feedback from Trial Stage

The purpose of the trial stage was for the teachers to acquaint themselves with some classroom research procedures and see how these new teaching strategies could be implemented in their teaching context; "...effective implementation is a *process of clarifications*.... Clarification is likely to come in large part through *practice*" (Fullan, 1991, p.106). Based on this assumption, the teachers were trying out some strategies suggested in classroom research to see the impact it would have in their own classrooms. There was a need to work out their own meaning about the process on which they were asked to embark.

After observing systematically student activity and keeping a diary, the participants reported on problems identified in their own art room. They tried out simple data collecting techniques, such as questionnaires to students, making fieldnotes, taking photographs of student activity and art room space and attempting to construct case studies. The teachers were given time to try out certain ideas within their own time schedule and type of lessons planned at their own pace. This was not as yet a full and systematic attempt on action research but rather a period of "easing into" action research procedures.

There was a need to incorporate such activities as part of their every-day natural teaching because they would not try it otherwise; the change might appear too abrupt. Therefore without making any major changes to their normal

teaching programs, Carol jotted down fieldnotes of her classroom activity; Tasoula gave her students a self-evaluation questionnaire on a theme she was working on before Easter vacation titled: The Crucifixion. Sophia H. And Sophia P. took fieldnotes about student activity during lessons they were already teaching.

An issue which relates to classroom research concerns the significance of students in implementing innovations successfully. Assistance was sought through references. Hopkins advocates student involvement in his article: "Aboard the Moving School", (1992) where he states that "another important factor in supporting policy creation can be the reactions of students in the school. When they are unaware of the reasons for change, they may unintentionally act as a barrier to progress".

Rudduck (1991) states "that where innovations fail to take root in schools and classrooms, it may be because pupils are guardians of the existing culture, and as such represent a powerful conservative force, and that unless we give attention to the problems that pupils face, we may be overlooking a significant feature of the innovation process" (p. 57). These arguments reinforced my concern to promote student involvement.

Initially, the teachers were sceptical about seeking student feedback and even more sceptical about their potential contribution to problem-solving. "No way, I can't ask my students to offer their views on anything. Besides, I don't think they have anything of value to offer anyway" (Tasoula, private session). She seemed to be adhering to the established notion of the teacher imposing instructions and the students implementing them. However, during the initial private interviews, the suggestion was made to try and design student feedback techniques in order to elicit student opinions on a variety of issues: why problems exist in the art room; how to make the art lesson more interesting for the students; how effective is a particular lesson; what comments they have on the development of their work and how they evaluate what they have accomplished. These aimed at getting students involved on classroom issues.

Despite their feelings of scepticism, the teachers did attempt to elicit student feedback because they felt that the attempt was experimental and under their control. Therefore, it appeared less threatening. I give below some details of student questionnaires designed by these teachers during this stage. The questionnaires related directly to lessons that the teachers were already involved in with their students. Consequently, it did not seem like extra work. Moreover, the questions were designed by the teacher herself based on what she wanted to discover about her particular lesson. Thus, it did not appear that an outsider was intruding in her personal classroom business. She was simply adding a new dimension to her own work as a teacher; or even perceiving her classroom problems from a different perspective.

Tasoula wished to get some feedback from her students on a specific lesson they had just finished in an attempt to encourage student interest in their work by offering them the opportunity to reflect on it. She gave the following questions (Data: 1.2) to direct the students.

Data: 1.2 Tasoula's questionnaire on Crucifixion

Subject: The Crucifixion.
Media: Paint and pastel on white paper.
1. How did you like the theme? Was it relevant?
2. Where did you have the most difficulty?
3. Was the teacher's help sufficient? What else could the teacher have done to make you understand better your work?
4. How do you feel about your finished work?

Based on responses given by a class of thirty, students (second-graders in junior high school) found the theme relevant because it was given to them just before Easter holidays. Most expressed satisfaction with the teacher's help. They encountered difficulties in achieving the appropriate movements and expressions in the human figures and trying to find the right color combinations to create the moody atmosphere of the Crucifixion. The students offered suggestions about their weak areas that might have been helped if the teacher had provided more appropriate visual aids. It is interesting to compare Tasoula's fieldnotes about how she perceived her lesson with what the students had to say. The two perceptions varied. The students expressed more encouraging comments about how they perceived the development of their work, while their teacher's comments about the same lesson were less optimistic; citing problems about students' lack of understanding and independence in doing the work. For student work on the Crucifixion, see Color Plate: 1.2. Three students' replies (in translation) can be found in Data: 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5. For Tasoula's fieldnotes (in translation) on the same theme, see Data: 1.6.

Sophia H. tried a different type of questionnaire for the younger students in the sixth grade of elementary school. She was trying out a new lesson for a new group of students. She gave them something innovative to try. She was taking fieldnotes during the lesson and she discovered that her young students were afraid to loosen-up and be creative. They had been taught to follow stereotype formulas for art. Sophia gave her sixth graders colored pebbles to look at closely and to discover lines, textures and shapes. They were then to use them to create free and exciting compositions using mixed media. Color Plate 1.3 depicts two pieces of student work based on this topic. The top work represents preliminary drawings on lines and textures inspired by the colored pebbles and the work below presents a completed piece. The theme, the approach and the media students were asked to work with were all completely new to them.

During our discussion, Sophia had decided that she should try and get some feedback from the students on all these unusual concepts she was trying out. Sophia tried a very simple questionnaire with just a few questions that could be answered by selecting from a series of funny faces and Snoopy cartoons expressing different levels of likes and dislikes. The idea for the questionnaire was taken from Hopkins (1985, pp. 74 and 75). For an actual sample of this questionnaire see Data: 1.7. A lot of interesting ideas came through the student feedback on the questionnaire which gave the teacher problems to work on for the next time she would try a similar experience for the students.

Another fun-type questionnaire designed by Sophia H. for her young students can be found in Data: 1.8. It asks the children to respond to the degree that they liked or disliked certain aspects of their art lesson by drawing in a flowerpot, a butterfly or a fish. The flowerpot represents the maximum degree, the butterfly the average and the fish the minimum. This particular questionnaire related to a lesson on animals, birds and fish drawings. Samples of these can be found in Data: 1.9, 1.10 and 1.11. Sophia's attempts indicated that she sought to reach her young students by trying more playful procedures in learning about textures, shapes and lines. In data: 1.9 a paper was given to the students with some animals already drawn on it. This was a close-up taken from the "The Dream" (1910) a painting by Henri Rousseau. They were asked to use their imagination and complete the empty space with their own animals by creating a jungle or a forest. In Data: 1.10 the students were given a paper with outlines of bird shapes. They were asked to fill-in the shapes through a variety of textures, lines and decorative elements. In Data: 1.11 the students were asked to create shapes of fish and boats after they were shown the painting "Sinbad the Sailor" (1923) by Paul Klee.

Carol tried a different, more sophisticated, questionnaire (taken from Hopkins, 1985, p. 73) for her older students in the American Academy. She was seeking answers to a lot of problems from her students. She told them that she does not understand why some problems exist within her art classes, and therefore the questionnaires will serve as a source of clearing-up certain mysteries within the classroom. For an actual sample of this questionnaire see Data: 1.12.

Even though at this stage, student feedback attempts were experimental and some of the questionnaires used were borrowed from books on action research, the entire attempt managed to excite the teachers about the potential in student responses by way of making them aware of certain hidden issues; for example, teacher's and students' perceptions on the success of a lesson might vary.

Reflections on Phase I

During Phase I, I felt very strongly about spending time with teachers as individuals because teachers' opinions in Cyprus are never sought; nor are

they highly valued in respect to introducing innovations or improving aspects of teaching and the curriculum. In fact, during the interviews the teachers were delightfully surprised when I asked their views on a variety of issues.

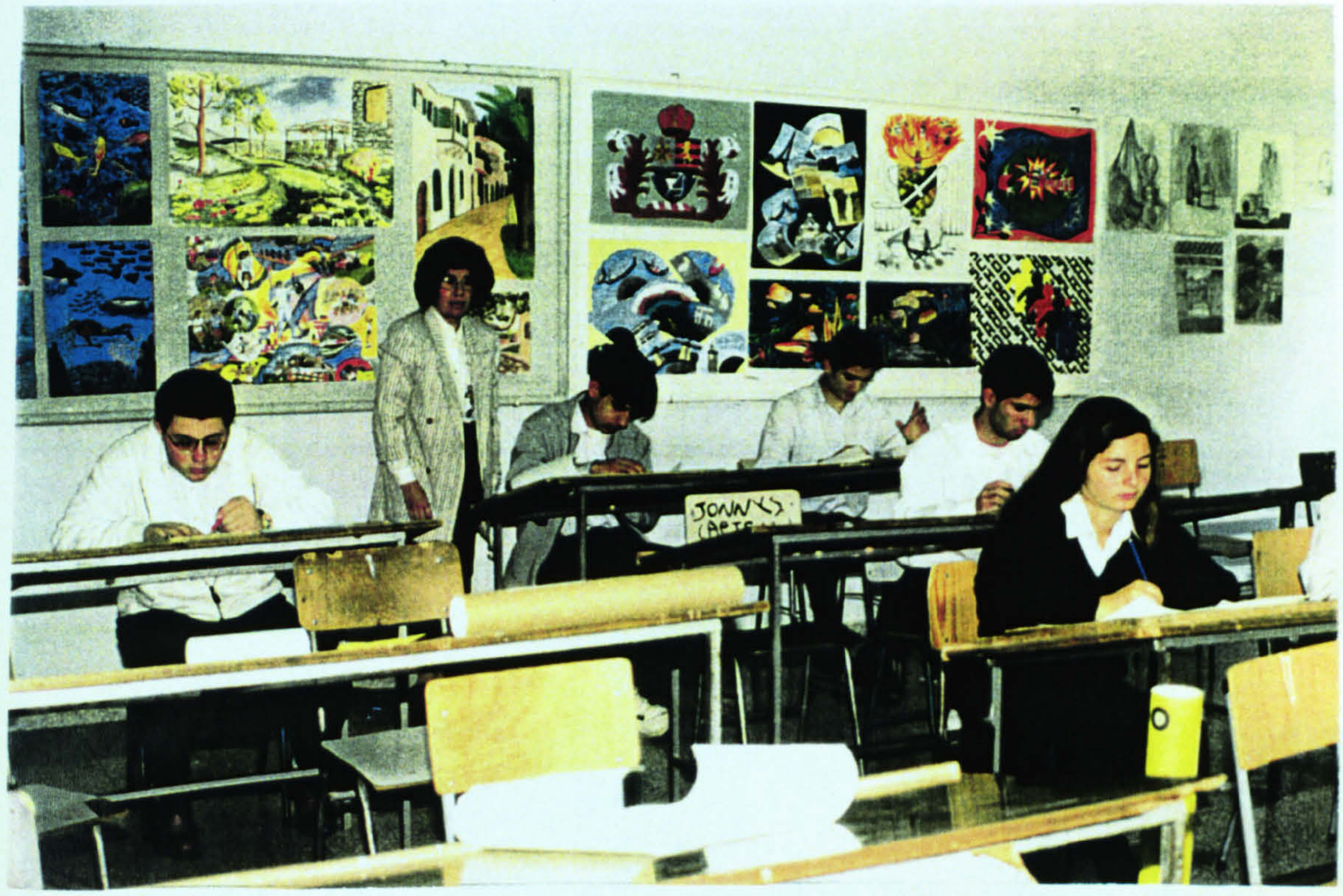
Moreover, after the interviews, and spending time with teachers as individuals from January through July, evidence seemed to point to valuable, new discoveries. The teachers enjoyed being in charge during the trial stage of classroom research, even though it was not an extensive effort as yet. They seemed to enjoy the breathing space they were allowed in between sessions in order to take in ideas slowly at their own pace. They further enjoyed being asked about how these new ideas would work with their own students. They enjoyed understanding the new procedures in their own reality. This reality related to classroom conditions, level of interest in their students, their own skills through academic training and their personality.

The art teachers seemed to relate favorably to the innovation because the issues were cleared-up for them. The innovation began to feel increasingly relevant to them as they developed their own definition of classroom research through practical implementation. They were beginning to get a sense of what they were doing and why it was worth trying. During the introduction of the innovation, it became evident that the teachers needed to know the benefit they would gain from this new experience and how closely it related to their own classroom business. They also expressed the need for support. They did not like the idea of starting on a new journey on their own.

It became more evident through the completion of this initial phase that the teachers would be more willing to try-out a new idea if they could see a clear possibility of improving their teaching in a way that they can understand, i.e. relating not to theoretical input but rather to their own classroom business, and to what they were already involved in classroom lessons. To discover this they needed to see something of how it has been done by other teachers and to experience directly the practical aspect of classroom research as well as the meaning behind it.

After gaining some understanding about how the main principles of action research might work in their classrooms, I considered that the teachers were ready to explore their classrooms and solve problems in a more mature and systematic way as a team.

Thus Phase I, was basically used as a preparatory stage to reveal each teacher's character, needs and the way she interprets the innovation by way of suggesting which specific points of classroom research she considers to be priorities. The discoveries in stage I clarified the direction that stage II needed to take.



Color Plate 1.1 Selected Teachers in their Art Rooms

Color Plate 1.2 Student work on Crucifixion

Δαφνέας Γεωργία
Τάξη: Β'6

Το θέμα "άγια παύη" ήτου ένα πολύ ωραίο και ενδιαφέρον θέμα. Το θέμο μας έδωνε τη δυνατότητα να εκφράσουμε αυτό που θέλουμε με τις γραμμές.

Δυσκολεύτηκα πιο πολύ στο στάδιο που έβαζα χρώμα στο σχέδιο. Με προβληματίζαν τα χρώματα, οι ίδιοι τόνοι κουτά-κουτά που έπρεπε να αποφεύγονται. Θα ήθελα να έκανα ένα κόμμάτι του σχεδίου με μελάνι, γιατί έτσι δεν θα προβληματιζόμουν. Όμως, στο τέλος αποδείκτηκε ότι πιο πάστελς μπορούσα να δημιουργήσω καλύτερα την ατμόσφαιρα που ήθελα. Η βοήθεια από την καθηγήτρια μου ήτου αρκετή, και χωρίς αυτή δεν νομίζω να έβγαινε τόσο καλό σχέδιο. Δεν μπορώ να πω ότι θα ήθελα και άλλη βοήθεια, γιατί τότε το σχέδιο δεν θα ήτου ένα δικό μου δημιούργημα. Δούλεψα αρκετά, αλλά στο τέλος ευχαριστήθηκα το αποτέλεσμα.

The theme crucifixion was a very nice and interesting thing. It gave us the opportunity to express what we wanted through movements of the human body.

I had a difficult time in putting color in my drawing. I thought a lot about the colors; not to use similar color values close to each other. I would've liked to draw one section of my drawing in black india ink but this would not allow me to think about color. However, in the end I found that it was much better to use colored oil pastels because this way I could create better the desired atmosphere.

Teacher's assistance was sufficient. Without it I don't think I could've made such a good drawing. If I had more help with my Art work then it would not have been my own creation. I worked hard, but in the end I was pretty happy with the final result.

Data 1.3 Student reply on Crucifixion

Ο σχεδιασμός του σταυρού για τα Άγια Πάθη ήταν μια ωραία εργασία όσον αφορούσε τις δυσκολίες στη δημιουργία του σχεδίου. Ήταν μια εργασία που μας έδινε την ευκαιρία να εκφράσουμε τα συναισθήματα μας για τα Πάθη του Χριστού. Οι δυσκολίες ήταν στις φιγούρες. Πώς θα τις σχεδιάσουμε, με ποια κίνηση και πώς να τις τοποθετήσουμε στο σχέδιο έτσι ώστε να είναι όμορφες και δημιουργικά στη σειρά που θέλουμε να φτιάξουμε. Το ζωγραφισμα, τα συνδυασμα των χρωμάτων ήταν εύκολα. Η βοήθεια που μας παρασχεθηκε ήταν αρκετή και δεν τρέχω να πώ ικανοποίηση.

The drawing we did on Crucifixion was a very nice work in which I found however some difficulties. It was a work where we could express our feelings on Christ's Crucifixion. The difficulty was in drawing the figures; how to draw them, what movements to use, and how to place them in the drawing in a way that they could be pretty and create the picture we want to express. The mixing of the colors was easy. I thought the teacher's help was sufficient.

Data . 1.4 Student reply on Crucifixion

Το θέμα μου άρεσε γιατί ~~μπορεί~~ ανάλογα με το ποιός άλλος είναι και την καλαίσθητη εμφάνιση. Εσένης μου άρεσε γιατί ενώ ήταν μέρες του Χριστού μπορούσατε να αναπαλλάξε μια δίκαιη από τα ~~[redacted]~~ σαν του όπως την φαντάζομαι. Δυσκολεύτηκα όλα πρόσωπα γιατί όπως είπα και στο σαν έπρεπε να έδινα την καλαίσθητη εμφάνιση ανάλογα με το ρόλο τον καθε άλλου.

Η βοήθεια σου μας παραχωρήσατε ήταν αρκετή και από μέρους σχεδίου και από μέρους γεγονότων. Πειδή φρονιμά εμείς με στεφά μας θα φτιάχναμε άλλες πληροφορίες σου χρειαζόμα. Η εισήγηση μου ~~[redacted]~~ είναι ότι με στο σωστή μελέτη θα γεγονότα θα μπορούσαμε να ~~θα~~ στήνουμε ακόμα καλύτερα το σχέδιο.

I like the theme because depending on the individual I drew in my work, I could give the appropriate facial expression. I also liked it because it was the time before Easter and I could bring to life a scene from Holy Week as I imagined it.

I had difficulty in doing the faces because as I said I needed to give the appropriate facial expression depending in the individual I was drawing.

I had sufficient help from my teacher both in my drawing and in offering factual information. Of course we had to do some research on our own for some added information. I believe that by doing more research into the facts of the Crucifixion we could've succeeded better in the final result.

Data 1.5 Student reply on Crucifixion

I planned my lesson in two stages: A and B. In stage A I taught composition of the theme Crucifixion and in stage B the colors, the textures and creating the proper mood.

During the lesson I noted that my students had a great difficulty in composing the theme Crucifixion. They had a difficulty in getting started on the idea. I showed them pictures from other Artists and had a group of student pose in class to point out the proper proportions of the human form. Despite all the help I provided for them, however, the students could not get started. I then suggested to them that they should start at any point in their work and I stressed that they should develop their initiative. The entire procedure lasted for two teaching periods (90') without completing the composition.

I did not pressure the students and I did not give them any dead lines as we were told to do by Ministry Officials concerning students' work because I believe that students need time to concentrate. The composition exercise continued right through the third lesson. Students kept complaining that it was difficult and I told them not to try to achieve the standards of the great Artists but instead try to express the theme in their own terms. There was lack of interest and enthusiasm on the part of the students at this stage. This lack of interest comes up most of the time. Students just don't get excited about Art .

The second part of the work was selecting the proper colors, color values, mixing the colors, creating the textures and the proper mood and expression of the theme. The students were allowed to use oil pastels with watercolors or just oil pastels. We discussed artists' works of the similar theme and their individual painting style. Because the school Art supplies were not of good quality I asked the students to bring their own. Only a few of them did. The other used school materials and the final works did not come out as well.

Even though I gave my students a lot of information there was still a lack of initiative on their part. They waited for the teacher to guide them; even tell them what colors to use.

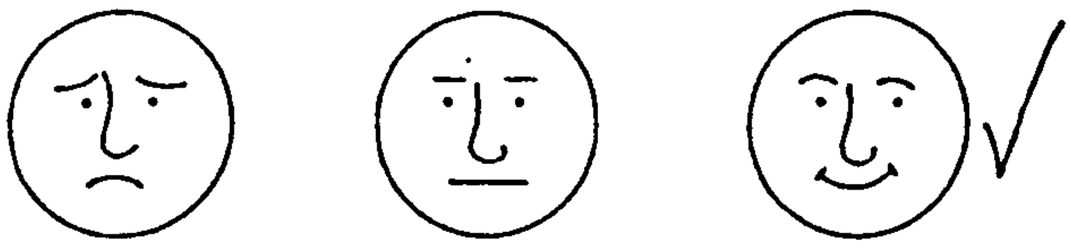
At the end of both stages A and B a discussion took place by the students on evaluating their compositions and then their works on color and textures. Only two to three students participated in the discussion. The others showed no interest. And even though students asked for my advice repeatedly, they refused to accept it when I offered it to them or even disagreed with it.

Data 1.6 Tasoula's fieldnotes on Crucifixion

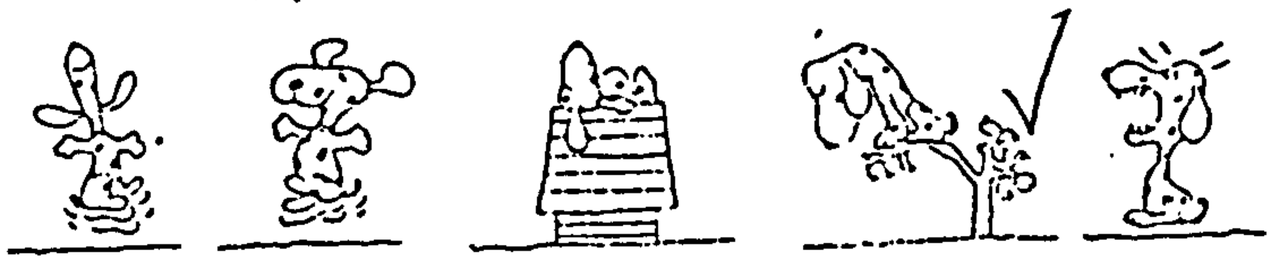
Color Plate 1.3 Student work on color pebbles

Όνομα: Βαγενζίνα-Ελευθερία Τάξη: Γ1

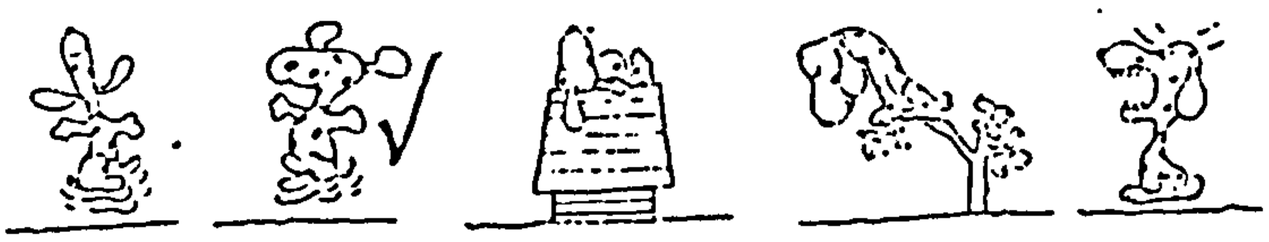
Πώς νιώθεις όταν πηγαίνεις η ώρα της Τέχνης;



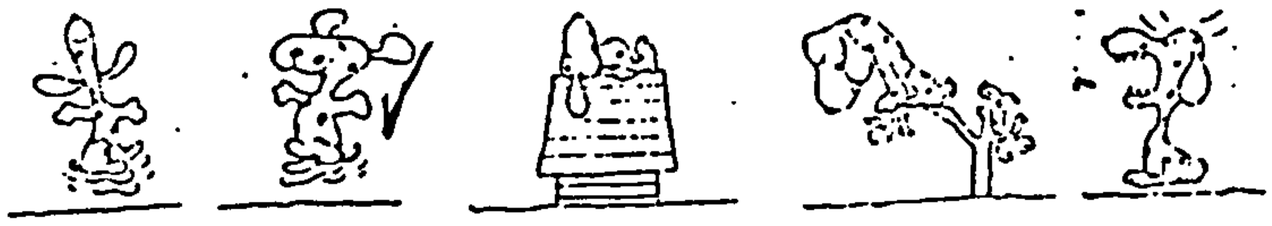
Πώς ένιωθες σήμερα στην αρχή του μαθήματος;



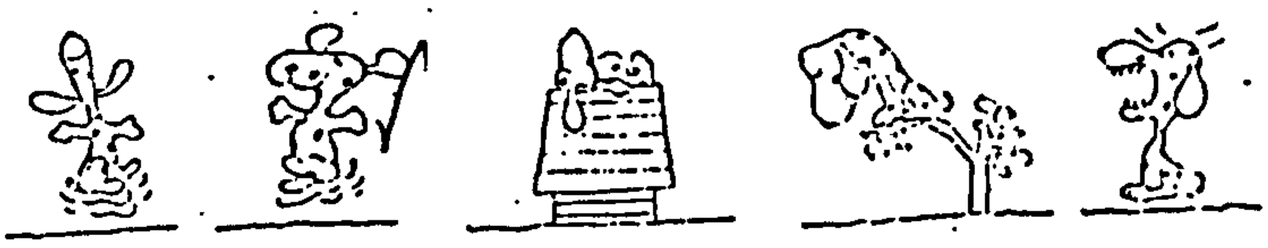
Πώς νιώθεις την ώρα που εργάζεσαι στο μάθημα της Τέχνης;



Πώς ένιωθες όταν έμαθες το θέμα με το οποίο ασχολήθηκες: Οι πίθοι;



Πώς θα έκανες να νιώθεις η ιδέα, ότι μπορώ να ζωγραφίσω στη σύνθεση σου, δάφνια ψηλά;



Πώς νιώθεις τώρα που τελείωσα τη σύνθεση σου;

Τι σου άρεσε από το μάθημα;

Που ενθουσιάστηκα πολλά χρώματα

Data 1.7 Sophia's cartoon questionnaire

ΕΡΩΤΗΜΑΤΟΛΟΓΙΟ

Σκίψτομαι, ζωγραφίζω, απαντώ.

= ΠΟΛΥ = ΛΙΓΟ = ΤΙΠΟΤΕ

Εάν η απάντηση είναι ΠΟΛΥ ζωγράφισε μια , εαν είναι ΛΙΓΟ ζωγράφισε μια και εάν η απάντηση είναι ΤΙΠΟΤΕ ένα .

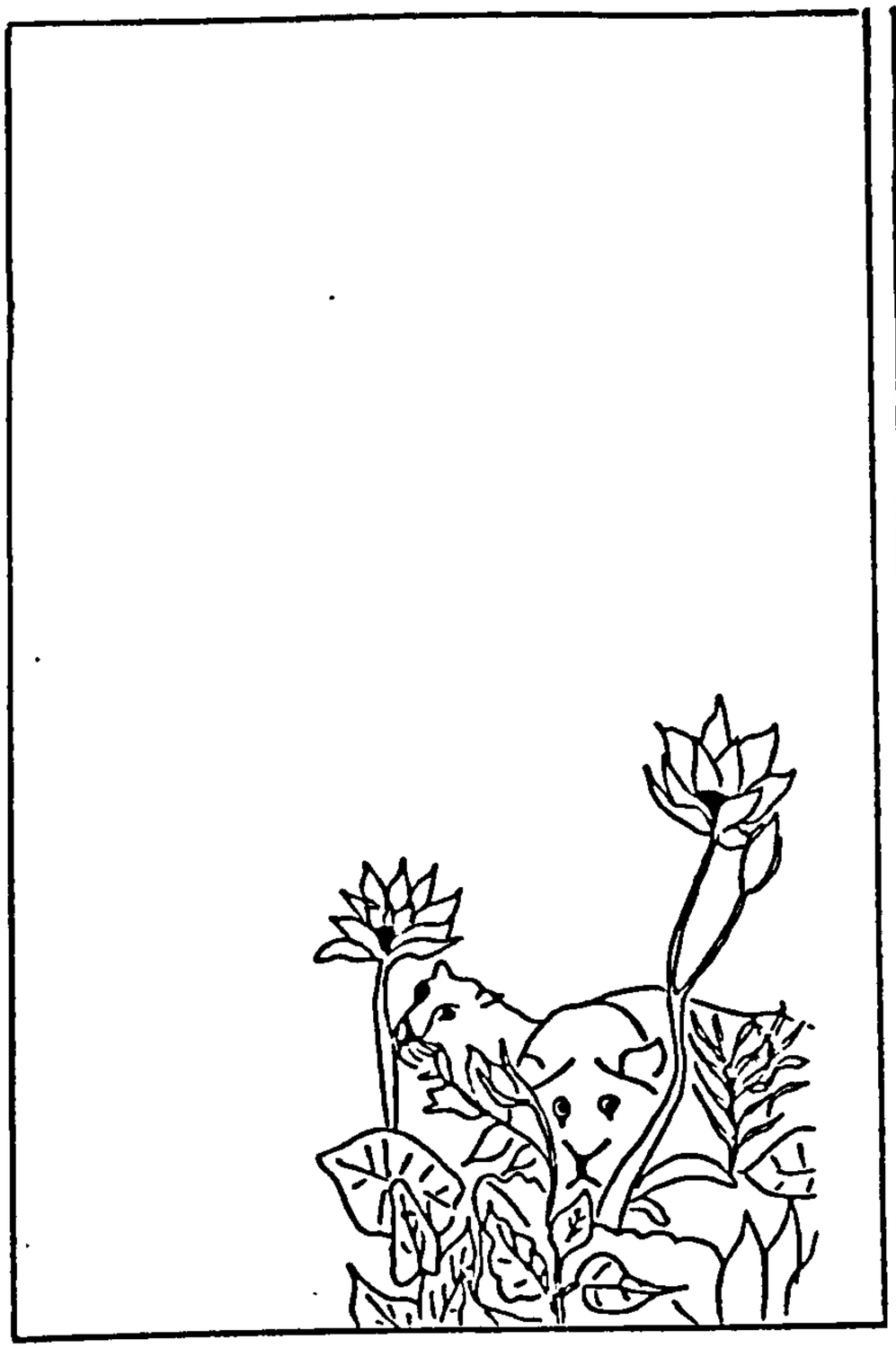
Ζωγραφίζω

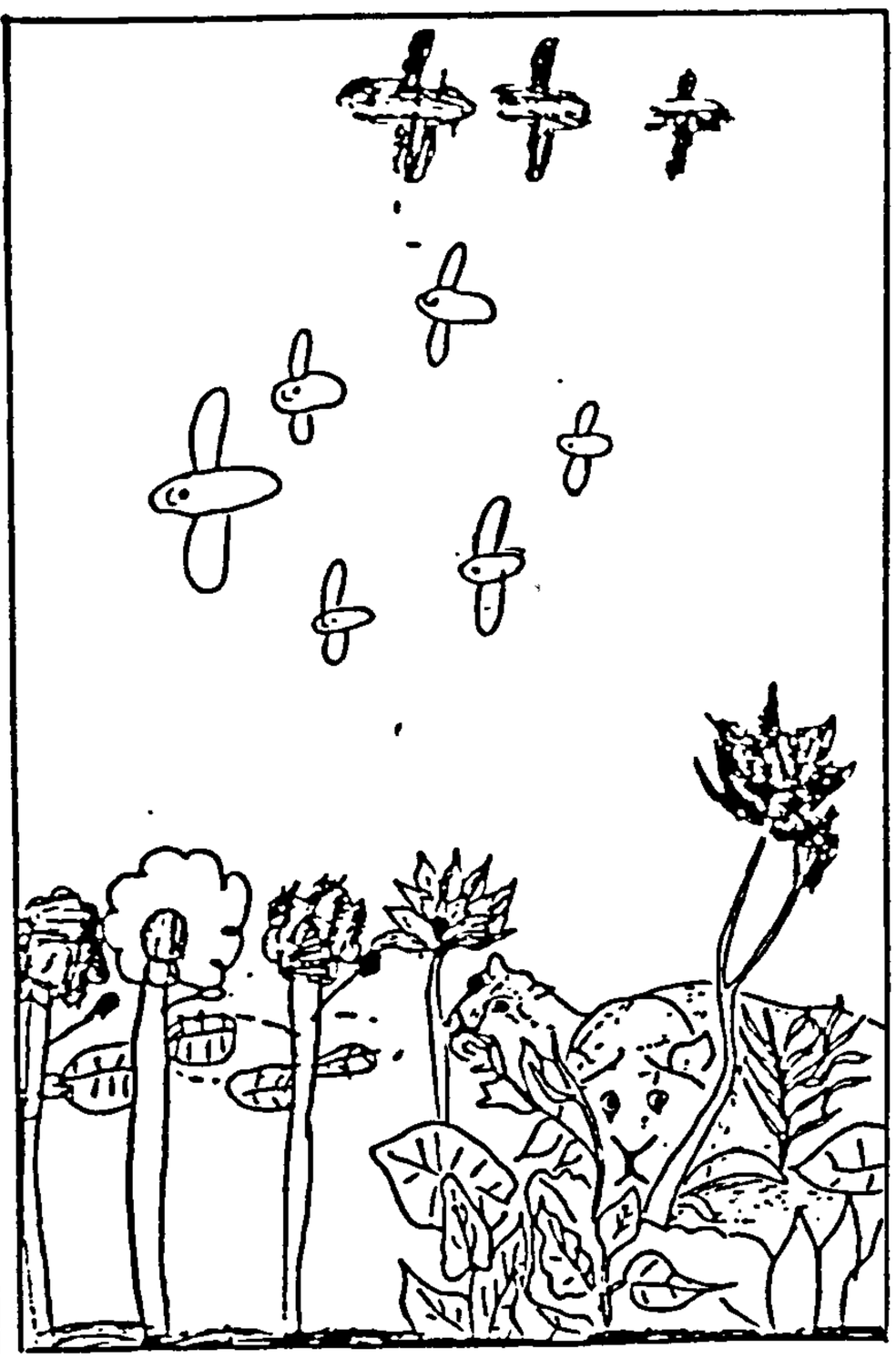
1. Μ'αρέσει το μάθημα της Τέχνης;	
2. Μ'άρεσε το θέμα Ζώα, Πουλιά και Ψάρια;	
3. Δυσκολεύτηκα να καταλάβω τι έπρεπε να κάνω;	
4. Νιώθω ωραία που εργάστηκα με διάφορα υλικά;	
5. Θα ήθελα να επισκεφθώ Μουσεία.	

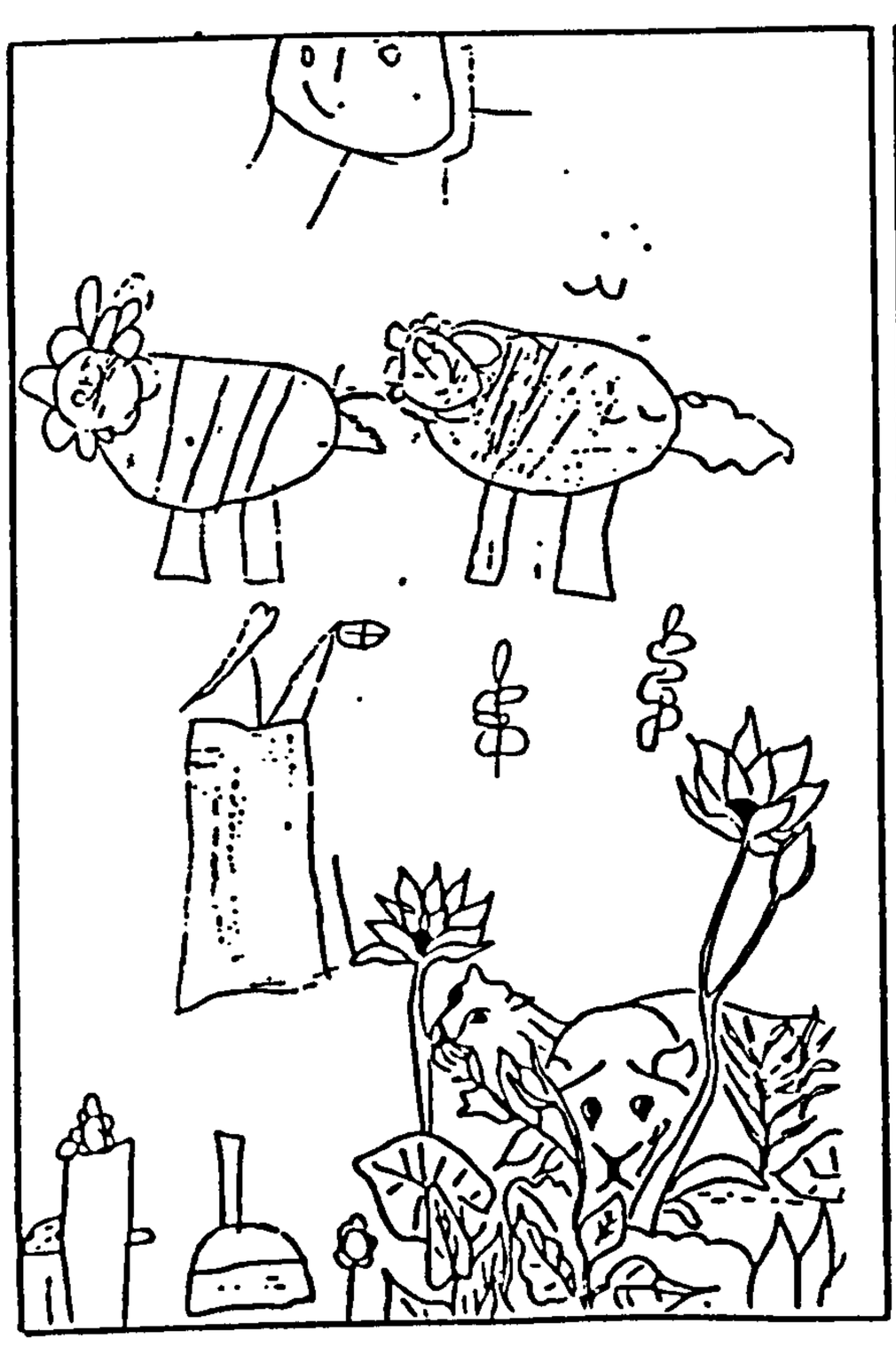
ΗΜΕΡ. Μάϊος 93

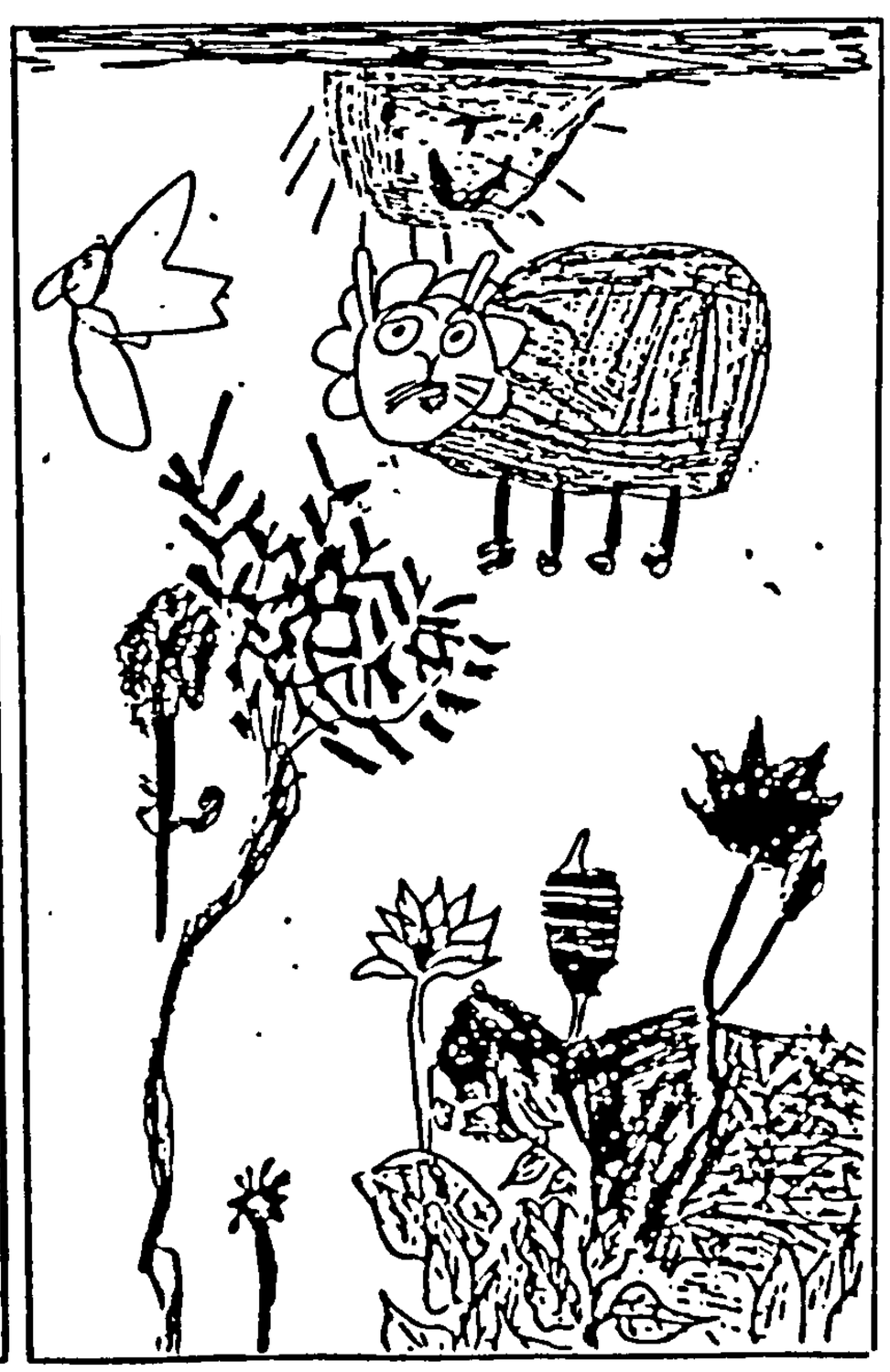
ΌΝΟΜΑ Ρίκω

Data 1.8 Sophia's questionnaire on shapes & textures



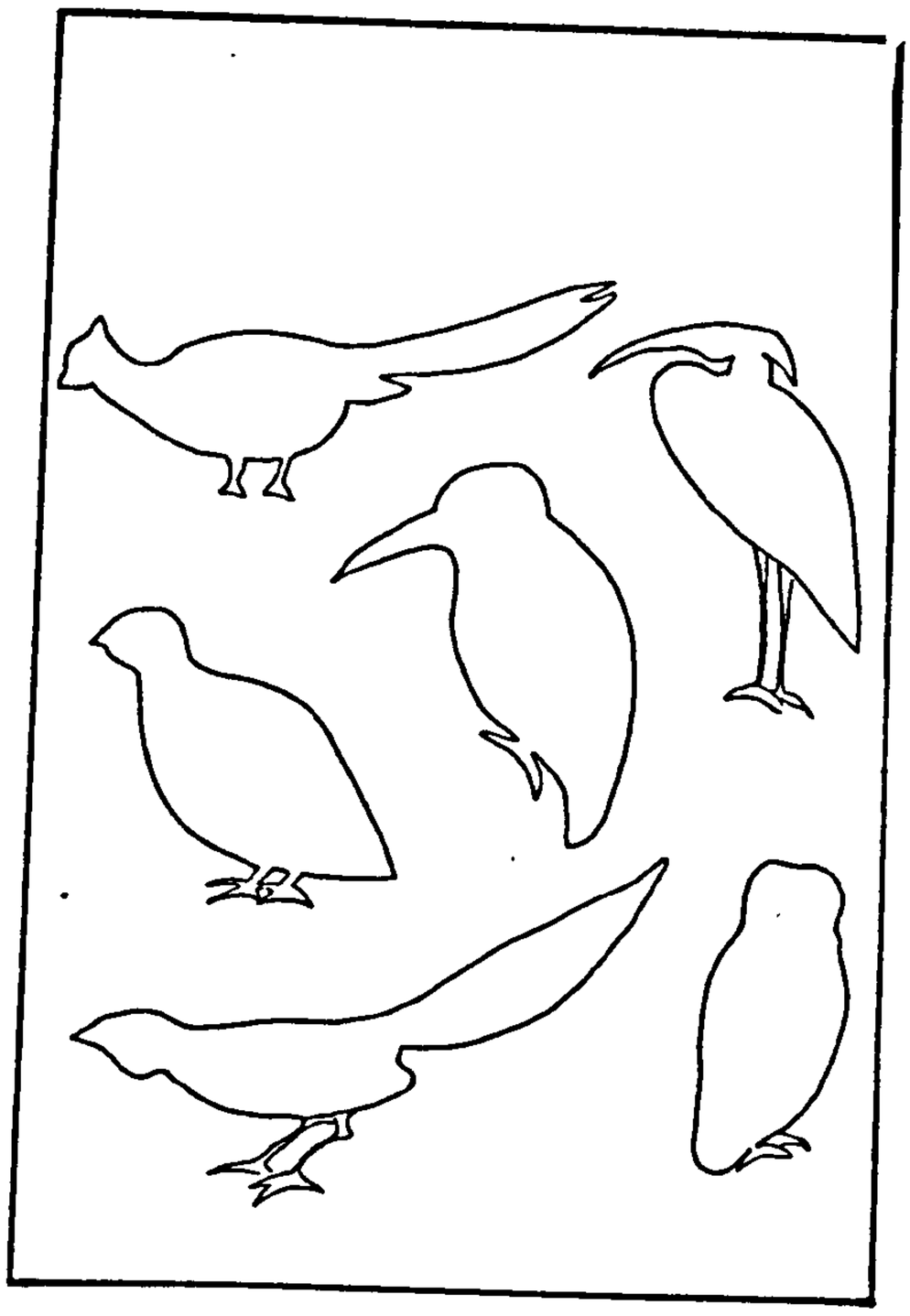


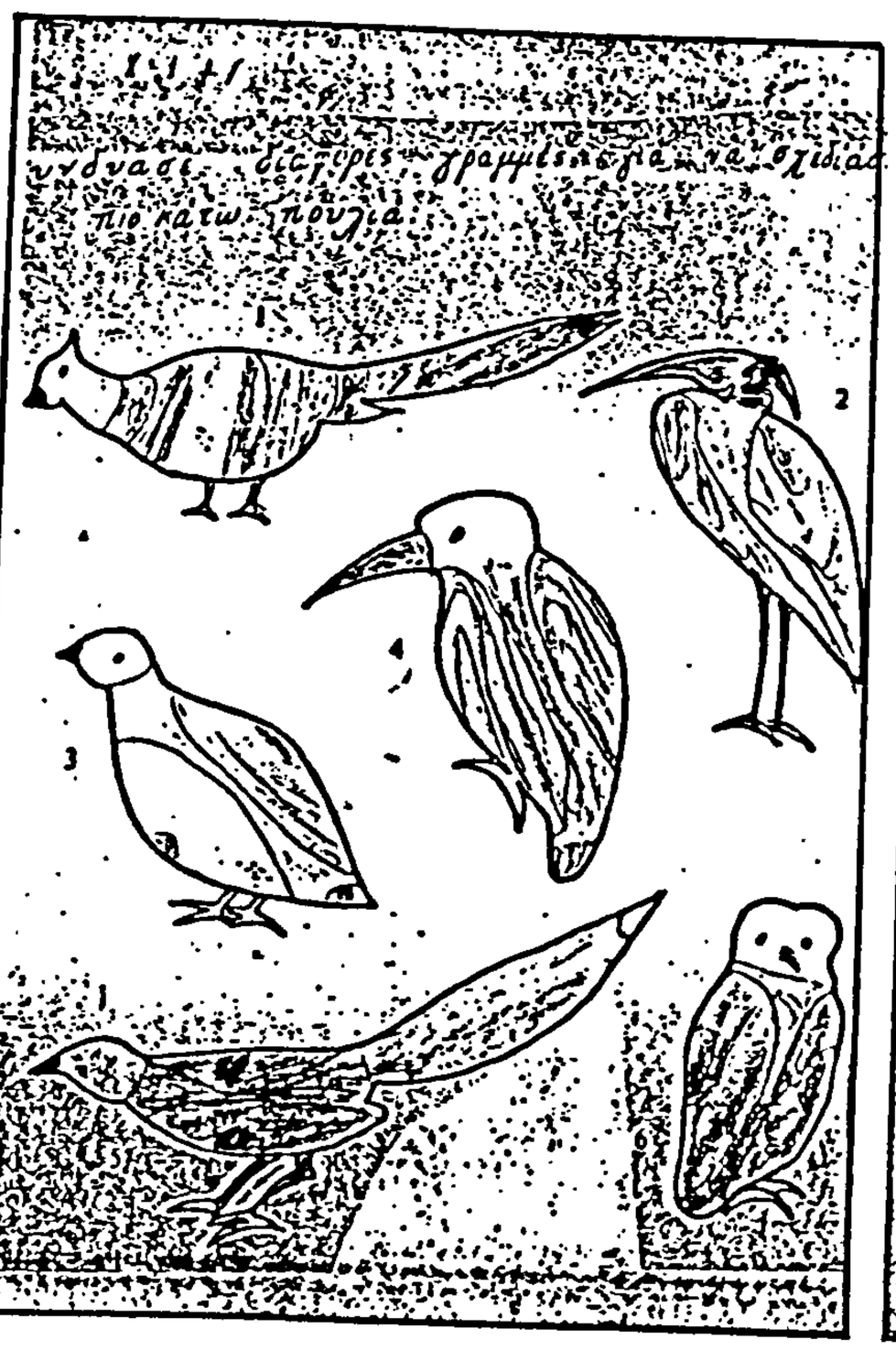




Data 1.9

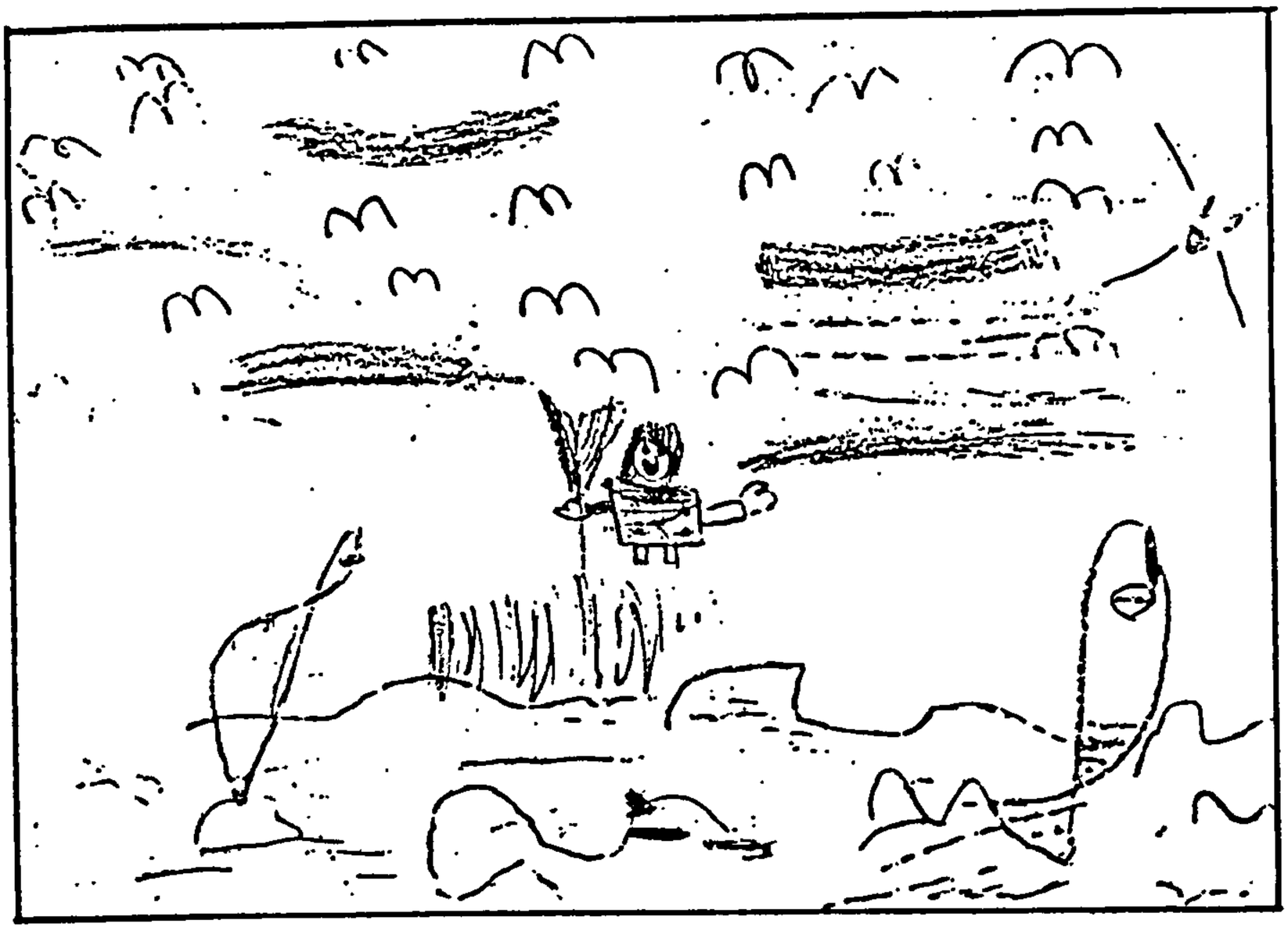
Student work on shapes & textures lesson

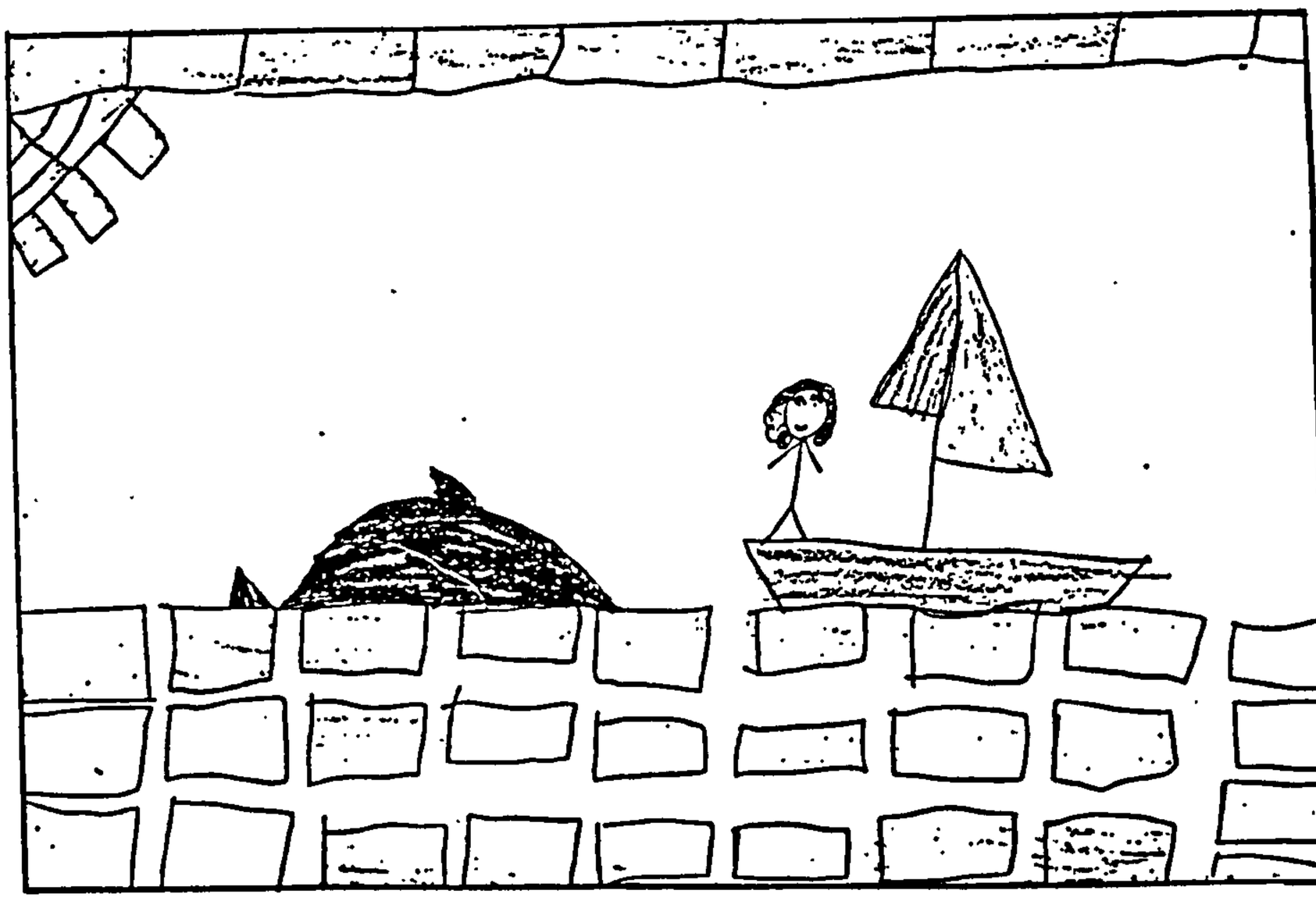




Data 1.10

Student work on shapes & textures lesson





Data 1.11 Student work on shapes & textures lesson

Please put a ring round the answer you wish to give to each question.
If you are not sure ring the nearest to what you think. mona Ascott

1. How much of the lesson did you enjoy? All of it/Some of it/None.
2. How much do you think you learnt? Nothing/something/A lot.
3. How much did you understand? Most of it/Some of it/Nothing.
4. Could you find the information, equipment you needed? None/Some of it/Most of it.
5. Did other people help you? A lot/A little/Not at all.
6. Did other people stop you working? A lot/Sometimes/Not at all.
7. Did the teacher help you? Enough/Not enough.
8. Was the time given for the project? Long enough/Too long/Not Long enough.
9. Was the lesson Boring/Interesting
10. Did you need anything you could not find? Yes/No.
11. Where did you get help from? Teacher/Group/Someone else.
12. Did you find this work Easy/Hard/Just about right.
13. Write down anything which you found difficult.
human figures.
14. Write down anything you particularly enjoyed.
discription (something you understand).
15. Write down any other lesson you either enjoyed or disliked during the year., or both.
disliked doing the shell picture with the imaginary background.

Data 1.12 Carol's student-questionnaire

Chapter 5

Phase II
The Development of the Collaborative Process

Phase II was mainly concerned with the establishment of the teachers as a coherent group. My account of Phase II (September, 2, 93 - January, 4, 94) will be divided into three stages:

Stage A: Preliminary/Preparatory Stage to Collaboration. This stage took place before the first joint meeting (September, 2, 93 - October, 31, 93).
Stage B: Initial Stage of Collaboration. This stage includes the activities and teacher reaction to the first joint meeting (November, 5, 93 - January, 3, 94).
Stage C: Group Establishment. This stage includes the subsequent activities and decisions taken by the group at the second joint meeting (January, 4, 94).

Each stage will be presented in the following format:

Introduction - meetings, main topics and group work procedures
Processes - activities the teachers went through during each stage
Outcomes - developments in teacher growth and awareness

In reporting Stage A I seek to justify the need for a preparatory period preceding the initial attempt of a joint meeting. Furthermore, I describe the activities which took place and teachers' responses to them. Stages B and C which describe the first and second joint meetings, are reported as two separate stages. This treatment allows for a close examination of the management of these joint efforts which proved significant to the subsequent work of the participants as a group. I conclude with a brief reflection on Phase II as a whole.

Stage A: Preliminary / Preparatory Stage to Collaboration

Introduction

The main objective of stage A was to assess whether collaboration was in fact, an acceptable way of working for these teachers before proceeding further and to prepare them for collaborative work if this should prove to be the case. Due to the persistent obstacles of teacher isolation and lack of communication it seemed appropriate to minimize the threat of the innovation that I was proposing. The change might appear to be too abrupt for the teachers involved. Moreover there was still the question of introducing a second innovation to the participants; namely doing classroom research through team work.

In order to assess the collaborative potential, teachers' views needed to be elicited on a number of issues. To this end, it seemed appropriate to further clarify the innovation of action research, the principles of collaborative work and the final goal of this entire endeavor. For this purpose, written explanations and visual representations of these issues were prepared. These were given in the form of four separate papers.

I decided that it was appropriate to continue the private contacts with each participant begun during the preliminary stage in order to give each the opportunity to clarify the issues further and express their views about collaboration.

In bringing teachers together to examine alternatives to the existing teacher development procedures, I was faced with the problem of introducing a completely new way of solving problems. In Cyprus, collaboration among teachers in solving problems is not a common event. In fact it does not exist. It has never been attempted before and I was apprehensive about introducing this approach. At this stage I had serious doubts about the likely success of the process of group work. For a start I thought that teachers might be highly intimidated by it. Therefore, I felt that the preparatory, investigative period was the best course of action in order to study the possibilities for success. However, it turned out to be a necessary step to opening channels of communication for developing a shared language. In order for teachers to embark on procedures to solve classroom problems, they needed to establish a common language.

Moreover, as another measure to minimize the threat implied by the innovation, teachers were treated as professionals by giving them a chance to discuss the prospect of collaborative work: how each felt about it; how it might relate to her own teaching style and how it could be implemented in her own school.

It is perhaps worth noting that teachers appeared to enjoy the one-to-one support between initiator and participant. I was anxious about moving to the next step of bringing them together as a working group, which was part of the original planning. I felt that I could be risking the safe relationship achieved thus far between me and the individual teacher. At this stage, however, solving the isolated problems of each teacher in her own art room, was not sufficient. It did not offer a strong enough measure to stimulate movement towards change on the part of the participants.

Through my reading I had discovered that the members of a group must feel important, needed, their opinions valued. Action research groups sometimes seem to have a slow start because teachers are not interested in this type of working. Perhaps when this happens the teachers are not offered an adequate rationale. They do not understand the principles of the innovation, nor

the implementation process, nor how this is going to benefit them. I sought to allow for such problems in my forward planning.

Bearing in mind these issues and considering the obstacles presented to me within the system, the following passage from Rudduck (1991) offered valuable input in triggering useful questions about introducing innovations to teachers. "In order to cope with the disorientations and upheavals that threaten professional status and confidence, individuals need to feel that change is not something that happens to them, and which they cannot control,....but instead something which they are in principle seeking and welcoming....They may not have been helped to prepare themselves for change and to work out in what ways they are, or are not, receptive to it and what it might offer them or their pupils" (p. 93). Stage A of Phase II sought to offer time for this preparation.

Rudduck goes on to discuss the right of the teacher to be introduced to the principles of the innovation; also the need to allow the teacher to offer her own interpretation of the innovation as she can understand it in her own terms and thus be able to communicate the innovation to others for example, students and colleagues. The teacher must be helped to make sense out of the principles which lie behind the innovation. Fullan (1991) discusses the issues of considering the individual feelings, views and needs of the participants in an innovation. Nothing must be imposed on the participants; rather patience is needed to allow them to lead the way. Outcomes must not be forced in order to satisfy expectations. Instead we must consider seriously the role of the participants involved in an innovation.

Elliott's (1991) point that theory is a threat to teachers because it is irrelevant to practical problems, suggested that I needed to be cautious in introducing innovations to teachers at a theoretical level. The practical aspect of the innovation must be emphasized and made directly relevant to teaching practice while considering teachers' views on that practice. Furthermore, in chapter 1, I had already concluded that one of the main drawbacks of the current teacher development scheme is its theory-based character.

In Phase I, I had sought to re-reinforce each teacher's self-esteem; now I needed to place that teacher in the group. First the teacher identified with the "I", the teacher role, and then she identifies with the "We", the group role. The "I" role aimed at strengthening the professional self. Stage A of Phase II was therefore essentially, a preparatory period, leading the way into the collaborative process.

During this stage, twenty-four private meetings took place: six meetings with Carol, three meetings with Tasoula, four meetings with Niki, three meetings with Tasia, three meetings with Sophia P. And five meetings with Sophia H.

Processes

The plan of action contained three elements: the continuation of private meetings with the participants, giving each material to read on the issues involved and treating each as a professional with important views to offer on the innovations.

Carrying on private meetings: seeking to understand teachers

The decision was made to continue the private transactions in contacting the teachers. During these interviews the main purpose was to collect information about the way in which teachers organize their teaching, what type of materials they offer to students as art learning and what teaching methods they use. This feedback would offer an insight into their way of thinking as professionals allowing me to proceed with collaboration in a way that served their purposes and needs.

Many issues were brought up during the discussions. Niki was trying to deal with the problem of handling her high school students who took art as an elective, by trying to think of themes that older students would find appealing. Carol was striving to get her upper-graders at the American Academy who needed to take art exams, to loosen up and at the same time enjoy art and see it as an important subject. In Color Plate: 2.1 Carol is shown with some of her students' still life paintings which she described as tight and lacking sensitivity in the use of paint and choices of colors. Tassoula's main objective was the development of creativity within her junior high school students by giving them unusual and stimulating themes to paint such as an imaginative under-sea world.

Tasia was describing with great surprise that her methods of teaching the human form to her junior high students did not work for all classes even though the students were all the same age group. She attributed this to the unique character of each classroom. "I spent so much time preparing for this lesson. I thought I had a fool-proof lesson that could work under any conditions. It worked only for one class of students. I must start thinking of what the problem is in my other classes". In Color Plate: 2.2 Tasia is seen in her art room teaching the lesson on the human figure and her fieldnotes on the lesson appear in Data: 2.1. Sophia H., was trying to raise the students' interest in art because she discovered that her elementary students had no particular interest in it whatsoever. In their work they followed formulas that they had been taught in previous years. She was confronted with the huge problem of changing student attitudes towards a creative approach to artwork.

As a result of teachers discussing their objectives and ways of working, certain elements seemed to come through about how they organize their teaching

practice. They seemed to organize their lessons according to objectives they set for themselves according to the age group of the students and not according to the official art curriculum. The objectives would originate around a specific problem they wished to deal with. This problem might be related to a new art course created in the school; to developing students' artistic habits in the art class; and to a search for ways of making art appear interesting to different age groups. It was evident that they could tell from experience that each classroom situation demanded a different approach and treatment because each situation consisted of unique problems.

They seemed to enjoy talking about specific lessons they had taught, objectives, teaching methods and the multiple practical problems they encountered. It was very seldom that they had had the opportunity to discuss their classroom business; they felt quite at ease in talking about methods and objectives because it was something they could relate to and control. Each teacher seemed to formulate her own theory about art teaching. The individuality of group members was a significant fact in itself.

Giving each teacher material to read

During these private meetings, I gave each a set of written notes to study. The written notes and the diagrams which accompanied the text, were used to support an oral discussion of the following issues: what were the teachers becoming involved in; how were they going to accomplish the task and why is this a worthwhile experience to go through? The actual papers can be found in Data: 2.2 - 2.5. I give below a brief summary of each.

Paper 1: Classroom research (see Data: 2.2)
This paper explained that classroom research is carried out by the teacher herself in her own classroom trying to investigate problems, experiment with solutions and reflect on outcomes. This is done without outside interference. The diagram that was used in phase I was presented to the teachers to remind them of the principles of action research. It was intended to show the developmental character of action research as I had interpreted it in Phase I. The intention was to give teachers the feeling that action research is not a given formula of steps that can be implemented overnight. Action research looks systematically at problems and then seeks solutions: It does not supply the teachers with solutions regardless of the problems.

Paper 2: Collaboration (see Data: 2.3)
This paper discussed the importance of the teacher's role within a collaborative setting. It was emphasized that all the participants in an action research group must take responsibility for offering suggestions about problems to research, to set goals for the team, to test solutions in their classrooms, to collect data and to report on them to the group. The diagram stressed that all the teachers are valuable and equal contributors to the team's success.

Paper 3: The final goal (see Data: 2.4)
The argument and diagram on paper 3 sought to clarify that the final goal of the project was to "affect the system". This made the project seem more interesting and less limiting as to what teachers might be able to accomplish; thus making it appear exciting, challenging and reaching beyond the art room.

Paper 4: Data-collecting techniques (see Data: 2.5)
This paper offered practical information to the teachers through a list of data-collecting techniques: taking fieldnotes, asking students to keep a diary of the development of their work, student questionnaires, taking photographs of students working and asking a friendly colleague to act as a participant observant. I wanted to supply teachers with evidence that the data-collecting practices I was suggesting had really been used elsewhere. I therefore included a sample questionnaire from Hopkins (1985). I hoped to learn what techniques would work in Cyprus.

Drawing on the four papers and their practical classroom experience, the individual teachers did in fact seem happy with the ideas about collaboration, action research principles and about data collection. They seemed to find the idea of group work quite attractive. "The efforts of seven people combined would offer a better chance of solving problems...Art teaching as it is, appears too accidental. Each teacher decides on her own what is to be taught. This leaves gaps in her teaching because she evaluates things only from her point of view. Through collaboration, maybe we could decide on the priorities of our teaching. We should communicate. We need to communicate. Teachers need to communicate but our system does not offer the proper conditions for it" (Niki, September, 12, 93). "It is important to keep the lines of communication open by continuing to talk....talking about the main problems" (Carol, October, 27, 93). "This collaboration could work just fine because presently there is no communication among teachers. I feel that there are no incentives offered to teachers to open up and talk to each other and share ideas" (Sophia H., September, 12, 93).

The prospect of collaboration was seen favorably by teachers. However, their responses at this stage seemed to indicate that they perceived collaboration as communication. Their understanding of collaboration did not yet possess fully the concept of collaboration at the level of implementing and reflecting on innovations which could change their way of working. Talking with others and sharing ideas was a sudden and pleasant alternative to the previous isolation. Collaboration seemed to offer at this stage a friendly audience with an interest in what they had to say and supported their right to say it. Thus far, this agreeable, 'mutual-interest' audience did not exist for them.

There seemed to be a favorable response to action research. "It's fun and exciting to be able to evaluate one's own teaching through research. It's not a guessing game. Also, it seems like fun to have another colleague to observe one's teaching" (Sophia, September, 12, 93). Tasoula had this view to offer: "I find it interesting. I want to solve problems this way. It's a good way of finding problems and just the right way for solving them. The teacher can express herself, good communication can be achieved and I feel it's the best way we found up to now to help us solve problems" (Tasoula, September, 14, 93). "This is a down-to-earth procedure, looking into one's own practice and solving problems; simple and practical and useful" (Niki, October, 12, 93).

Critical comments were made about the art inspector's ineffectiveness. The teachers' comments implied that the inspector is always avoiding the real issues and simply lectures on established theories of art education. "I get scared when she comes into my room. She makes me feel very uneasy; as if I'm doing something wrong, but I don't know what. I did not understand her comments on my work. Instead of commenting directly on what she observed in my teaching, she gave me some theories to follow which were irrelevant to what I did that particular day. So, in a sense, I did not get an evaluation on what I did that day in my class, but instead, a theoretical lecture on the general philosophy of art education. I don't know anymore what I'm doing. I was not made to think of what I did that particular day" (Tasoula, September, 14, 93).

"When the inspector visited my class last week, she did not focus on essential problems but talked of irrelevant items which art teachers simply have no control over" (Niki, October, 12, 93). During our private meeting on September, 27, 93, Sophia P. immediately raised the issue of the inspector's seminar held in September which all art teachers were required to attend. "The inspector spent most of the time talking about how she was going to try and supply schools with more art materials and other equipment. More art materials are not going to solve our classroom problems; this is irrelevant. Giving students more materials is not going to help if they are not interested in using them. That won't limit the large numbers of students in my classroom". Furthermore, the elementary school teacher, commented at our private meeting on September, 12, 93 that in general, inspectors' and head-masters' assessment procedures of teachers are simply ineffective.

There was a positive response to the data-collecting techniques introduced in Paper 4 which they thought offered good possibilities for collecting information from their classrooms. They emphasized especially the wide-range possibilities offered through student feedback. They felt that this might actually help to find possible solutions to problems by comparing their views on lessons with those of the students, and stimulating useful discussion among students.

Tasia and Carol designed their own student-questionnaires to evaluate general aspects of their teaching. Tasia designed a questionnaire for the first time while Carol was designing her second questionnaire to evaluate her teaching. In Phase I she borrowed an example from Hopkins (1985) as her initial attempt. The questionnaires below seemed to exhibit teachers' independence in designing their own questionnaires in reference to their needs.

Tasia designed the following questionnaire (Data: 2.6) for her junior high students as an attempt to assess general feelings on her art teaching.

Data: 2.6 Tasia's general questions on art

Answer the following questions or the ones you can relate to:

1. What have you learned in art so far ?
2. Do you like art class? Why ?
3. What don't you like about the art class and why ?
4. How would you prefer the lessons to be taught in the art class ?
5. The students who are not interested in art how would they like to be evaluated?
6. Write down what was difficult to learn in art class?
7. Write down what you enjoyed the most in art class ?
8. Ideas, suggestions about what the students with disciplinary problems could do in art ?
9. Any suggestions about how you would like to get evaluated in art?
10. How would you teach art if you were the art teacher ?

Tasia later came to the view that she had tried to cover too many topics in her questionnaire. However, some useful comments emerged and samples of these are given in Data: 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9.

A different type of a questionnaire was designed by Carol by combining, as she put it, a little test on what the students remembered in art, a fun section of drawing items and a section where they were asked to offer their views about which lessons they preferred. Carol was again evaluating too many issues in one questionnaire, but she did report that students were interested in presenting their viewpoints and she discovered that according to the feedback from her students there was an evident disagreement between teacher and students as to what were the effective art lessons. For a sample of this questionnaire, see Data: 2.10.

In the private discussions about the four papers, the teachers offered a variety of views which seemed to suggest that there was a general feeling of enthusiasm for this type of working and solving problems. This allowed me to proceed with more confidence in preparing for the first joint meeting. Receiving an encouraging response from the teachers on the is-

sues allowed me to guess that collaborative action research might have a good chance of working in Cyprus.

Valuing teachers as professionals

During the interviews, one of my objectives had been to establish for each teacher the important role she would have in this project. Making each individual teacher feel important meant treating them as professionals with significant views to offer. Nothing was imposed on the teachers. Even the written information that was handed out to them was given as suggestions for discussion, to clarify certain issues, and to offer examples. It was not proposed as a definite plan of action.

With the greatest sincerity, teachers' opinions were asked on all issues. They were encouraged to speak openly and freely without interruptions. I would listen and offer suggestions for reflection. I took notes to show that their views were taken seriously and would be an important moving force in this research project. If there was something that needed to be explained, I would relate it to their actual teaching experience and present examples. It was not assumed that the teachers could understand all the issues brought up for discussion. They were allowed to interpret issues through their own teaching realities.

The process moved along at the teachers' pace even though that was quite slow. There was an attempt not to become anxious and force the outcomes regardless of the genuine reaction and contribution of the participants thus risk losing the natural pace of the process. This period of seeing the teachers individually was taking sometime, but this proved helpful because the teachers felt more comfortable by not being pressured. Thus they became more open about discussing their ideas, more self-critical, and more willing to cooperate.

A major concern at this point, was to avoid over-directing the entire process. It seemed appropriate that the criteria for the success of the first joint meeting should be offered by the teachers themselves. Three of the participants who seemed to be more dynamic, were asked to offer their views on how the first joint meeting might be handled so that it would have a better chance of success. What type of problems should be emphasized?

Carol offered the following suggestion when asked to offer her views: "well, what we are doing now is important; trying to adapt our teaching to meet the demands of today's world. Since education is becoming more oriented towards design and technology, the question that comes to mind is what could art offer in these directions; how can art support students' learning in these directions? Maybe a new art curriculum is needed to be designed along those guidelines. Suggest this issue at the joint session".

When asked whether teachers would feel comfortable about calling up each other to present a teaching problem and ask for support Carol replied: "I would not feel comfortable about calling the other teachers because I don't know them well. Only through you I shall be able to communicate at first. Maybe it would be a good idea to ask each teacher to introduce herself at the joint meeting by saying a few words about herself; where she studied art; what type of art she studied and where she teaches" (Carol, private session, October, 93).

It is interesting to note Carol's concern. She was feeling insecure about expressing herself openly in front of strangers. She felt that by learning something about the other members' art background that might give her an idea about the type of audience she was facing. She was concerned about establishing some type of trust between her and the rest of the participants. Furthermore she exhibited a concern about how she would measure up to the other teachers' knowledge and experience of teaching art.

By valuing them as professionals allowed space for the participants to take part in decision-making on crucial issues; such as issues for the first joint session.

Outcomes

In light of teachers' responses during the private meetings at this period and teachers' initiative in designing student-questionnaires, it became evident that certain movement was achieved in respect to a more mature awareness and a more developed perception on the part of the participants. These "movements" will be summarized in terms of teachers' perceptions of classroom problems; awareness about the possibilities of improving teaching practice; and the manifestation of common concerns. Together these brought the participants to a point where they were ready for a joint meeting.

Perceptions of classroom problems

There were definite signs of movement in the way in which these teachers perceived their classroom problems. Responses to the question "what are your particular classroom problems", seemed to indicate that teachers were indeed able to articulate and admit to problems and difficulties. I felt that this was possible because time was given to them to express themselves, substantial reasons were offered to them such as the valuing of their ideas and finally an interested party who would listen to what they had to say.

These problems were not those articulated by the inspector at seminars or teacher development courses. They were not irrelevant and general problems, but related directly to their particular concerns on classroom practice. Difficulties were identified in a wide variety of teaching contexts; ele-

mentary school, junior and high school; American Academy. Also, the problems seemed to relate to various aspects of art learning: lack of creativity, lack of spontaneity and sensitivity in artwork; students having problems working together; and art courses which did not satisfy the students' demands.

Moreover, the teachers began to perceive their classroom problems in relation to their teaching effectiveness. This allowed them to raise questions about improving their teaching. What are the problems which do not permit one to reach students? The teachers suggested solutions which focused on raising levels of student interest rather than on how to teach a particular idea.

Members of the group were increasingly able to articulate problem setting and problem defining in ways which could guide them to discovering possible solutions. Formulating questions as suggested through classroom research procedures managed to put an order into their thinking and helped them find a connection between the problem, the reasons behind it and the search for possible solutions.

Possibilities of improving teaching practice.

Beyond classroom-problem awareness and articulation, this stage made teachers feel excited about the possibility that action could be taken to solve problems in their teaching situations. They were convinced that this new way of working seemed to promise a lot. The participants expressed the need to work towards solving the problems and they were willing to take action towards achieving that objective.

They appeared to accept that action research procedures seemed to offer a way of easing into problems at one's own pace in order to experiment with solutions. The group idea seemed to promise support through joint reflection on the outcomes of experimentation. Teacher tension seemed to be alleviated through the discovery of a new way of perceiving classroom activity as opposed to a general theory application to classroom problems.

Common concerns about teaching problems

It is perhaps worth repeating that the participants were different in many respects regarding their art training, school context, art teaching strategies, teaching objectives and priorities. Despite their differences however, common concerns did surface as a result of allowing them to discuss their teaching practice and concerns relating to that practice.

It became apparent that it was not the procedure that concerned the teachers but the urgency of the problems they were trying to solve. Presently, they were applying solutions that they thought would be effective without first investigating the reasons behind the problems or seeking student involvement.

There seemed to be a superficial attempt on their part to improve teaching. Outcomes of solutions were not discussed with other colleagues. Problems were mainly related to the inadequacy of the art curriculum in helping them to organize their thinking and set priorities.

There was by now a clear indication of the teachers' willingness to communicate their concerns and problems to the other participants. These indications offered answers to the question posed for this stage: to assess the collaborative potential of the participants before attempting a joint meeting and to prepare the participants further to handle a joint gathering; to think about their own particular classroom problems and how they perceived action research as a way of tackling those problems.

The preliminary stage of Phase II had offered the group a sense of security in the realization that teachers are not strangers after all. They do share common problems and beliefs. Their common beliefs and agreement to meet seemed to indicate their readiness to meet jointly.

Carol's student work on still life

Color Plate 2.1

Color Plate 2.2 Tasia's figure drawing lesson

Problem: Human figure

Seeing my students in grade A of junior high school systematically avoiding drawing nor painting human figures for a variety of reasons, I thought that it was necessary to solve this problem and give them more freedom in expressing human figures.

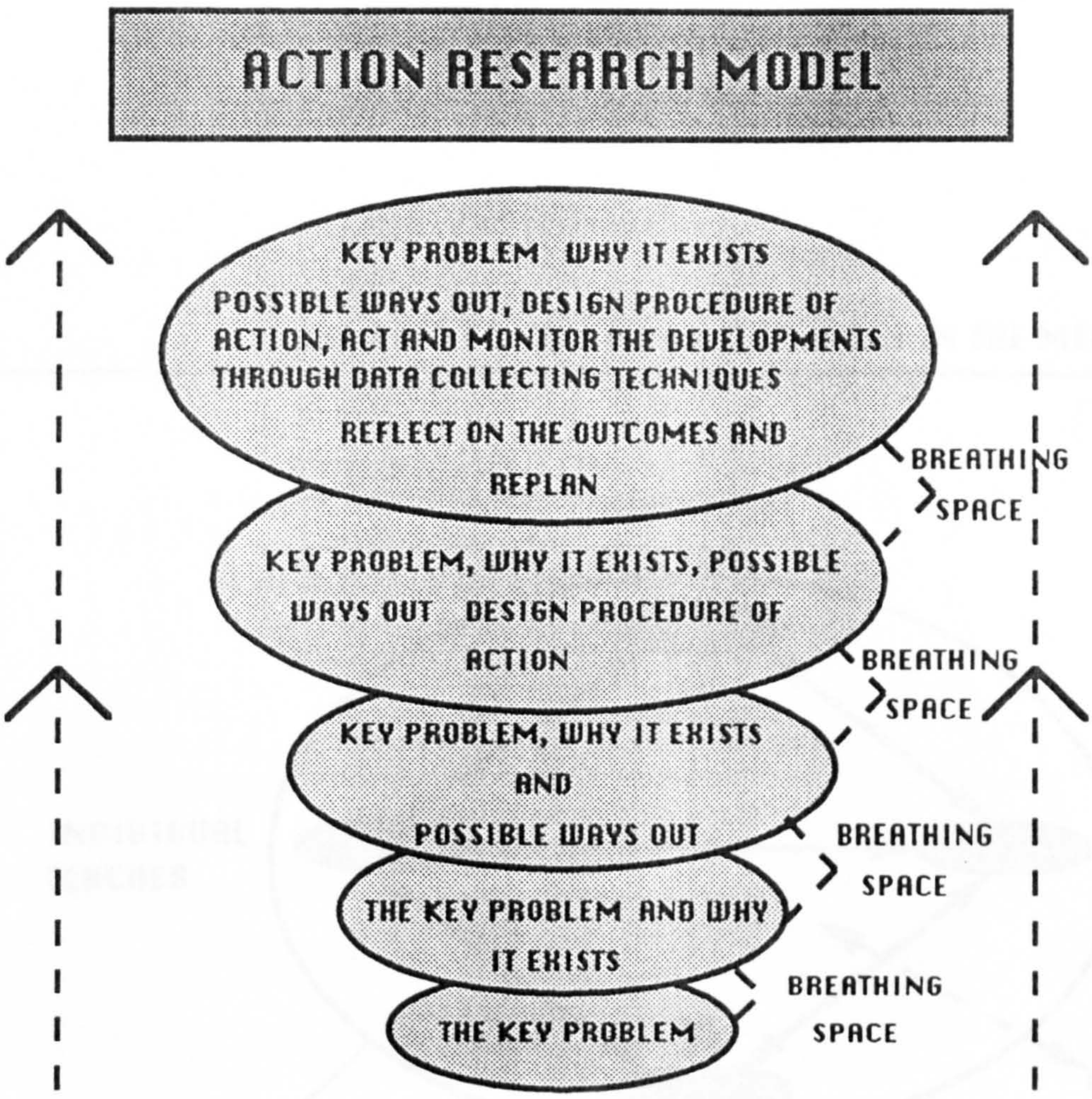
Problem 1. If I don't paint the figure correctly the teacher won't like my work and will lower my grade.
Problem 2. I will ruin my drawing because I don't know how to draw people correctly.
Problem 3. If my drawing or painting is not good it will not be put in the final school exhibit of student work and therefore I won't be able to prove myself and show that I as well can be creative.

Solution to the problem:
1. The students should become aware that the correct or realistic human form is not necessarily the one with perfect proportions. So a human figure could be considered artistically correct without much realistic detail.
2. My drawing is not ruined because I learned to draw and paint with more artistic freedom and showing my own personal expression.
3. My drawing is good when it has creativity, expression of feelings such as joy and sadness. Art can express feelings of beauty as well as ugliness.

Work procedure: Students are to draw freely a variety of poses from life using quick circular movements with a pencil in order to show just the movement itself. This will allow the students to become aware of the entire movement of the figure posing and not the details. This exercise lasted for two teaching periods (90').

After gaining some freedom in human form movements, students will try other media, such as, oil pastels, watercolors or even clay to create figures in showing movement and not detail.

Data 2.1 Tasia's fieldnotes on figure drawing

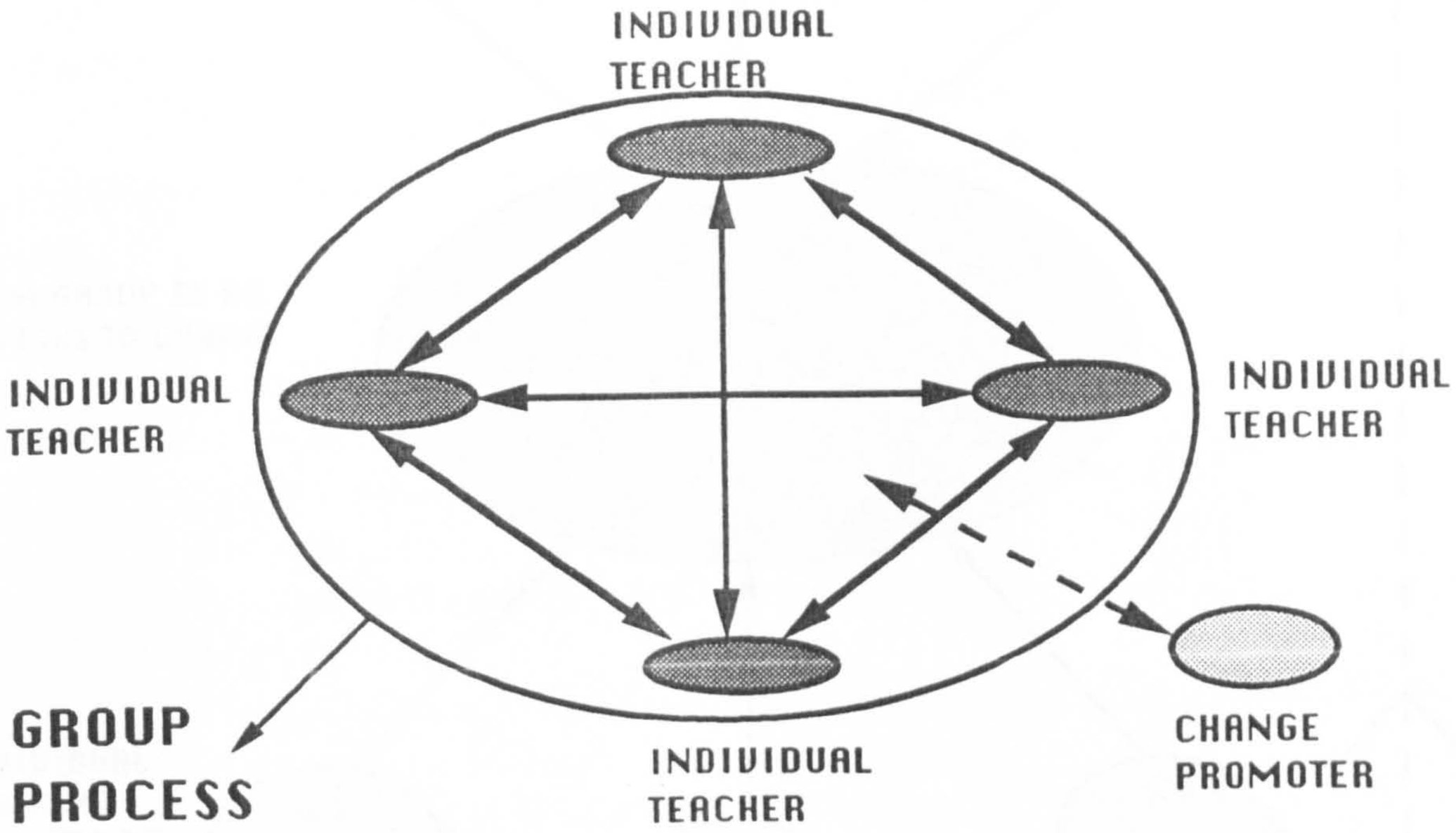


Classroom Research.

Classroom research is carried out by the teacher him/herself in him/her own unique situation trying to solve problems through research and critical reflection on one's own teaching practice. Look at diagram No. "B" for a classification of the stages of classroom research.

-FOCUS ON TEACHER AS DECISION-MAKER.
-RELATES TO PRACTICE NOT THE THEORY.
-SOLVE CLASSROOM PROBLEMS.
-RELATES TO SPECIFIC CLASSROOM SITUATION AND THEIR PROBLEMS.
-HELPS TEACHER IMPROVE HIM/HER OWN TEACHING.

THE ROLE OF THE CHANGE PROMOTER IN THE MICRO PROCESS



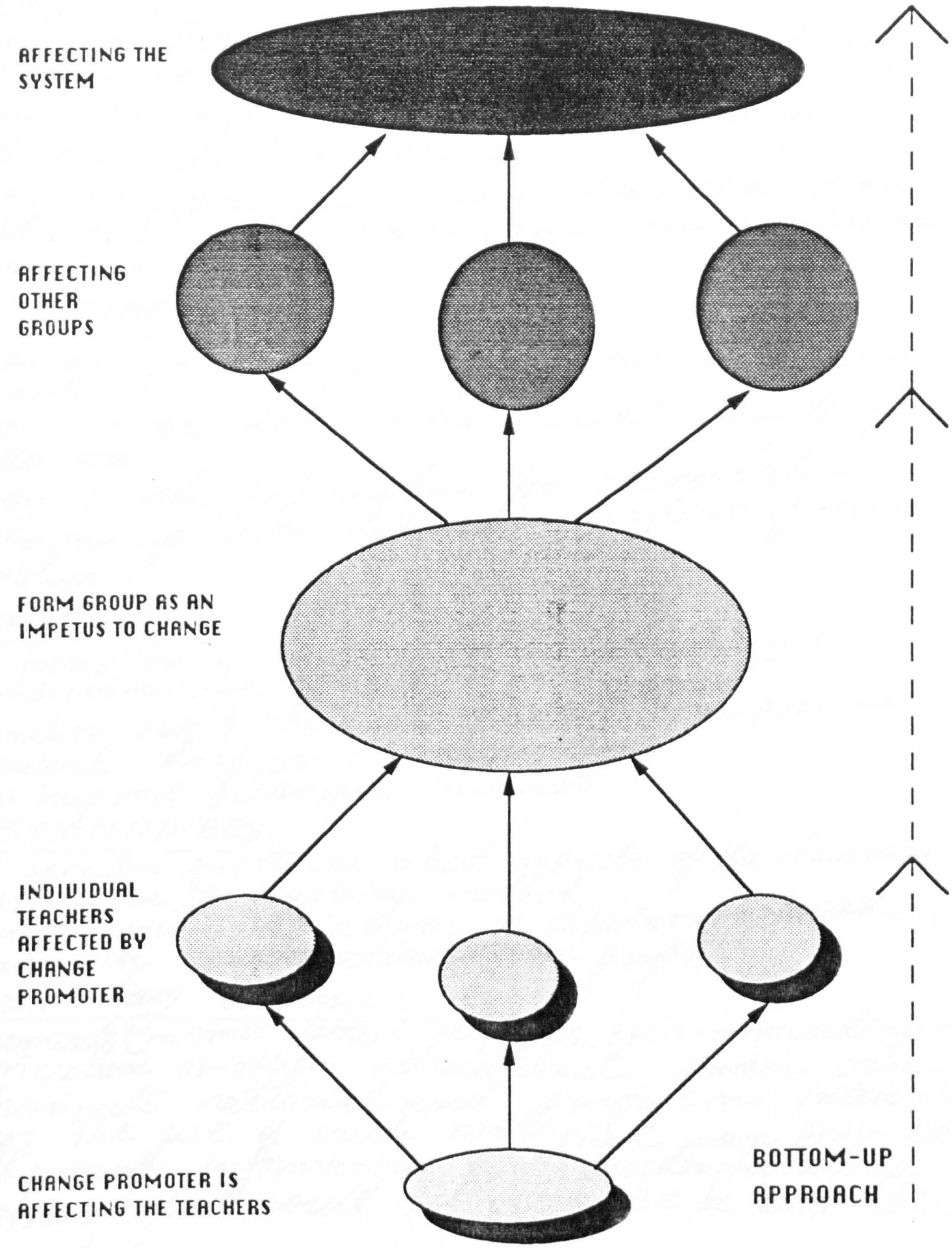
"TEACHER ROLE " AND COLLABORATION

All participants in an action research group are expected to share in setting research goals designing the research project collecting and analyzing data and reporting results always contributing their unique skills and insights to the group.

Collaboration provides a supportive setting which allows participants to experiment with change and draw on ideas perspectives and skills of colleagues from school. This kind of support of experimentation may also contribute to individuals developmental growth.

The out standing characteristics of the extended professional is a capacity for autonomous professional self-development through systematic self-study through the study of the work of other teachers and through the testing of ideas by classroom research procedures.

THE ROLE OF THE CHANGE PROMOTER IN THE MACRO PROCESS



The teacher as a participant towards achieving the final goal.

The members of the group are part of an on-going process which is creating an awareness for the need for change in the system. Diagram No. "A" shows the evolution of the entire process in stages.

VARIOUS DATA-GATHERING TECHNIQUES

A variety of techniques that teachers can use to gather information about their teaching.

FIELDNOTES:

- They can focus on a particular issue or teaching behavior over a period of time.
- they can reflect general impressions of the classroom and its climate.
- they can provide an on-going description of an individual child that is amenable to interpretation and use in case study.

PUPIL DIARIES:

- they can provide a pupil perspective on a teaching episode.
- they provide data on the general climate of the classroom.
- they provide information for triangulation (comparing three different view-points of the same problem.

INTERVIEWS:

- to focus on a specific aspect of teaching or classroom life in detail.
- teacher pupil classroom discussion can provide general diagnostic information.
- to improve classroom climate.

QUESTIONNAIRES:

- ask specific questions about aspects of the classroom, curriculum or teaching method.
- quick and simple away of obtaining broad and rich information from pupils.

Documentary evidence:

Documents (memos, letters, clippings, etc.) surrounding a curriculum or other educational concern can illuminate rational and purpose in interesting way. The use of such material can provide background information and understanding of issues that would not otherwise be available.

Case study:

the case study is a relatively formal analysis of an aspect of classroom life.

Α 1.1

Μ'αρέσουν οι ζωγραφιές με χρώματα, (όλων των ειδών τα χρώματα).

Δεν μ'αρέσουν τα σχέδια με το μολύβι.

Μου αρέσει η ελεύθερη-αφηρημένη τέχνη, και να δημιουργώ κάτι αφηρημένο, χωρίς να έχω κάτι στο μυαλό μου.

Με δυσκόλεψε η «Νεκρή Φύση», παρόλο που ήταν κάτι το πρωτότυπο, και το ωραίο.

Θα ήθελα να κάνω σχέδια με υδροχρωμάτα και pastell. Θα ήθελα να εργάζομαι μόνο με την φαντασία

Α 1.1.

Β.Κ.

A 1.1

I prefer paintings with colors (all types of colors). I don't like pencil drawings. I like the free-abstract Art, and creating something abstract, without having something specific in mind.

I had a difficult time with the ``still life'', even though it was something unusual and pretty. I prefer working with watercolors and oil pastels. I would like to work only with my imagination.

Data 2.7 Student responses

Α 1.1

Θα προτίμαια ένα μάθημα Τέχνης α[illegible]
μαθητες να χαραζουν σε φυλλα αναρχα με
το ειδος, με τα υλικά σου θελω και
οχι τι τα επιβαλλουν. Ντι ζωγραφιζω ειτε
νεκρή φύση, η [illegible] να ζωγραφισω ανθρωπους,
προσωπα,
Το μολυβι πλαν και βαρετο-φαιδρο δεν εικα
ριθμισε το μαθημα. Θα προτιμουσα παστέλ
υδροχρωμες
Επισης δεν θα ηθελα να ζωγραφιζω για
διαγωνισμο εικονων χρωμα. Οποιοι θελουν
να ζωγραφισουν οι υπολοιποι ας φτιε ζωγραφι
ζαν και αλλο

A 1.1

I would prefer, in Art class, students to work in groups according to the Art medium they choose to work with and not to be told by the teacher what to use. I would like to paint what I choose; still life, faces or a variety of objects. The black pencil was a very boring medium and students did not enjoy it. I would prefer to use colored oil pastels or watercolors. Also I did not like working for the European painting contest. This should be left up to the students. It should be voluntary.

Data 2.8 Student responses

Α 1.1.-

Θα προτιμούσα το μάθημα της τέχνης να γίνεται με τρόπο ώστε ο μαθητής να σχεδιάζει σύμφωνα με το δικό του γούστο και αρέσκεια και όχι ου επιβάλ-λει ο καθένας π.χ. αν μας δοθεί ένα συγκεκριμένο θέμα που δεν μας αρέσει δεν θ'αποδώσουμε σωστά ενώ αν σχεδιάζει ο καθένας ελεύθερα το θέμα που του αρέσει σύμφωνα με την έμπνευσή του τότε θ'αποδίδει καλύτερα. Έτσι θα είχαμε και ποικιλία θεμάτων. Θα προτιμούσα να σχεδίαζα θέματα από την καθημερινή ζωή την φύση, το σχολείο, το περιβάλλον την υγιεινή αυτοματα κλπ. χωρίς τεχνη αλλά όχι αποτύπωση προσωπογραφιών και ανυπαρκτων υ.λ.π.

A 1.1

I would prefer that the Art lessons are taught in such a way that the student could draw according to his own taste and likes and not according to rules. For example, if we are given a specific theme that we don't particularly like then we will fail, but instead if we draw what we prefer then we do better on our Art work. This way we get a variety of themes. I would prefer to draw themes from every-day life, nature, school life, the world around us, health even abstract Art but not to copy faces and objects etc. .

Data 2.9 Student responses

Name— Michael Christ,

1. 1. Write the Primary colours
red, yellow, ~~white~~, blue

2. Write the complimentary colours.
Green, blue, orange, black.

3. Give the names of three artists.
a. Picaso
b. Michelangelo
c. Rancak

4- On the paper provided draw an eye.

5. On the paper provided draw an ear.

6. On the paper provided draw an imaginary face.

7. Thinking about your art lessons
Describe six different projects over the past two years: — .
Give reasons why you liked or disliked each o

① I like the first one in the first class which was one circle with a lot and different colours.
② The second one after the first one in which we have to draw many and different hands.
③ Then I like the draw where we have to paint the hand with details.
④ In the point where you told us that I gave you a picture and you have to draw it with changes and different but ~~it will not meet the point~~
⑤ You gave us some things and we had to draw it with their shades.
⑥ And the other one is where we have to draw a clown. That it was really funny.

Data 2.10 Carol's student-questionnaire

Stage B: Initial stage to collaboration

Introduction

Even though, during the preparatory stage, the practitioners' response to a joint effort had been positive, I still felt apprehensive about the likely success of the first group meeting. The traditional lack of communication among teachers was a persistent obstacle which overshadowed the success of the group session. In contrast to the preparatory stage, whose concern was mainly to assess the collaborative potential of the participants and to prepare them for the first joint meeting, the first joint meeting needed to convince the participants that this alternative way of working would be useful.

My concern led me to design a list of issues (from the ones teachers offered during stage A) which was to be given to the participants at the first joint meeting. This was taken as a precautionary measure in case the participants would feel uncomfortable about suggesting issues for discussion in a group setting with people they did not know. The list would at least offer them suggestions for a fruitful discussion.

At the first joint meeting, which took place on November, 5, 1993 six of the participants were present (including me as the initiator). The one member who could not make it on that particular date, asked to be informed by telephone about developments. The session took place at a neutral location outside the school environment. The group met at a small conference room of a hotel which was convenient for all. The meeting lasted from 4:00 until 6:30 with a 15' break for coffee.

Feelings of exhaustion and despair relating to their classroom teaching were expressed as practitioners came in and settled down at the conference table. One of the participants said that she was feeling very upset about her students' lack of concentration in the art class. "How can I make my students see what I want them to see?" Tasoula asked the other members. Tasia expressed the feeling that she was really getting tired on her own with no other art teachers to talk to at her school. She had to make all the decisions on her own without any type of support. "Teaching art is becoming so complicated that it is impossible to cope any more. All we can do is keep on trying; but what's the point to that? Students are not very interested in art". Expressing a deep feeling of despair, Sophia P. confessed to the other participants that she was ready to retire from teaching.

The meeting was called to order by the initiator and reminded the participants that they were there to confront problems of art teaching. Each member was given a prepared card with the group's names and phone-

numbers for everybody's convenience. This was to imply the feeling of togetherness; "We the team members". Each name was written in a different color. The teachers found them useful and amusing.

At the beginning of the meeting each practitioner introduced herself to the other participants by giving her name, where she taught and for how long, and about her training in art. This was Carol's idea, suggested during the preliminary stage of private meetings. The members seemed a bit uncomfortable talking about themselves. What made them feel more relaxed and secure was when they started discussing with each other the problems of their profession.

The participants initiated the discussion. The paper with the list of issues prepared as a precautionary measure was not needed to assist in the discussion after all. It seemed that I had underestimated the ability of the participants to suggest relevant issues for discussion and their ability to direct the discussion as well. I felt at this point that I had made my first mistake (one that the existing teacher development scheme was doing, that is, directing practitioners too closely).

The discussion was lively and the participants were immensely interested in what was said during the meeting. Carol initiated the discussion. She came prepared to present work to the other participants. She had photocopied student work sheets (from art teaching books) aimed at getting the team started on creating new learning materials for their own students. She also presented to the group a student questionnaire she had already given to her students in order to evaluate her own teaching effectiveness. Carol's gesture proved valuable to the other colleagues. It served as an invitation to the challenge of designing new measures to approach their own art teaching.

The other members studied the work sheets and the student-questionnaire very carefully and offered their views on using these types of learning materials in art class as a way of helping the students to get started on an artistic idea or even as a way of stimulating their imagination. Tasoula expressed a concern that this might be a bit dangerous because students might get trapped in a given idea and not use their imagination.

The main issues carried over from the private sessions were the ineffectiveness of the art curriculum and of the inspector's visits to the classroom. Another issue was the negative attitude to the value of art as a school subject which was a major source of problems in their profession. It was suggested that the art curriculum, as specified by the inspector, was difficult to implement. They were asked to apply the same curriculum to different contexts and students. The teachers found it confusing and often ignored it.

The specific questions they brought up, which they felt that the existing art curriculum ignored, related directly to the real and practical problems they were experiencing in their every-day teaching. What would be an effective curriculum for a classroom of forty students who exhibit no interest in art whatsoever? What would be an effective curriculum for students who have art only forty-five minutes each week? How do we organize our teaching since things get repeated each year, confusing teachers and students? How might we give students a sense of learning and a sense of continuity through a new curriculum?

Furthermore, a strong feeling was expressed at the meeting about the need to design a course description for each grade separately. The teachers felt that they needed to know exactly what problems to tackle in each grade and which methods would be most effective. "I cannot function properly with this uncertainty in my teaching. I need to know what ideas to teach in each grade" (Sophia P.). "The lack of emphasis or specification about the type of material to teach in each age-group leads to repetition. Many colleagues teach exactly the same material in all age-groups. I also feel that most art teaching is accidental. We teach whatever we feel like. Each decides on her own on what she wants to teach. This looseness creates tension because we are always uncertain about what we teach" (Tasia).

Student group projects were discussed as well. Possible solutions to the difficulty of handling classes with large numbers of students were suggested. Sophia P. described the way she handled her art elective group in high school by assigning group projects. She felt that this approach, did something to alleviate the problem of large numbers of students. She handled five or six group projects as opposed to many individual works which were more difficult to evaluate.

Issues, not immediately related to class teaching but seen as adding to the difficulties of the art teacher were also raised. The group agreed that students as well as parents feel that there is nothing worth learning in the art class. It is always perceived as a school subject of secondary value; a relaxation period for the students. Parents feel that no assessment of student work should be taking place because art is not a "real" school subject. All students should be graded with an A. This negative attitude on the part of both students and parents creates frustrating situations for the art teachers. The members felt that no one really understands what they are attempting to do in their teaching.

A related argument was brought-up by Sophia P.. She made the observation that the course in design and technology is organized in packages of lessons. "Students like that because they can see their work developing. Perhaps we could create similar working packages for our own students in art class. This might help to convince other people outside art, that

learning does take place in art by demonstrating that we use organized learning experiences. We need to prove somehow to others that art offers something valuable to students".

After discussing problems they encounter in the art room, the group turned its attention to its future plans. The following main decisions were taken by the participants. They decided that teachers need to talk about their teaching ideas with other colleagues. Therefore, more joint meetings would be scheduled. Furthermore, certain tasks were suggested for these future meetings:

1. It would be a good idea if all the members could bring to the next joint meeting their own students' works to show to each other, ask opinions and discuss the way each solves certain problems in the art room. "We all solve problems differently. We should discuss and examine how each of us deals with similar problems in her art class" (Tasoula). By problems teachers meant the way they make students comprehend certain artistic concepts and the way they deal with students' lack of interest.

2. It was decided unanimously, that it would be easier to work on a common problem because it would be easier to plan joint action. "We should, as a team, choose one theme and discuss the outcomes of our findings at future meetings. We must plan this at the next joint meeting" (Tasoula). The student learning question was proposed as the first problematic area for investigation. It might be possible to concentrate on teaching one artistic theme for a year; for example, teaching the human figure with different approaches in order to get the most out of it. "Having more contact with the same idea and experiencing it from different artistic viewpoints and media, the students might be able to understand it better" (Tasia).

3. Another suggestion agreed by the team members was the possibility of "taking apart" the art curriculum and giving it a new look that could be more readily implemented. This would involve thinking seriously about appropriate visual aids.

4. "Also, we must schedule the next meetings, decide on a specific theme and write it out and try it in actual classroom conditions. When we collect student work we should bring them to meetings and express our views on them" (Tasoula). Carol had of course spontaneously done this at the first joint meeting (see Color Plate: 2.3) and the group decided that this was a valuable activity.

At the end of the first joint meeting and at private sessions which took place after the joint meeting, participants were asked to give their views on the experience. "I feel that a teacher needs the support she can get from discussing problems with other colleagues. It is difficult for a teacher to face problems on her own. This experience we are involved in is working for me

because now I see things differently. I'm not afraid or confused when I come across classroom problems. I don't feel as if I'm doing something wrong. I'm not afraid to make mistakes in my teaching because I know I can discuss the problems with the other participants and this relieves tension. I know I'm not alone. This is beginning to be a learning experience for me" (Sophia H., December, 19, 1993).

"Joint meetings should be more frequent. We should keep a close contact and discuss all problems with each other. The more people involved, the more ideas will be heard. A chance is given to talk to others; to talk openly of our ideas and problems. Maybe we can offer possible solutions. The joint meeting was good. Many viewpoints were heard. Through the discussion some crucial things surfaced. We need to clear up things in our teaching" (Tasoula, December, 19, 93).

"I'm so tired of being on my own. I'm willing to invite another colleague in to my classroom to help me team-teach. This group of equals will give us a chance to talk openly about ideas, problems and possible solutions. This is the way to solve problems. Talking over problems with other people, getting their viewpoints and coming up with ideas to solutions" (Tasia, December, 22, 1993).

The support available from the group seemed to offer them confidence. This was the motivation needed to try new teaching methods. During the private sessions in stage A, one of the participants felt quite reluctant to try eliciting student feedback through student questionnaires. She felt that the students would probably have nothing of value to offer anyway. After the joint meeting and Carol's presentation of her own student questionnaires, this particular teacher felt more confident about trying something similar for herself. Sophia H. also admitted that she would not have dreamt of giving her students questionnaires or even asking their opinions on her art lessons before. "Now I get the support which gives me the confidence to try out new and bold ideas in my teaching" (Sophia H., December, 30, 1993).

As a first step to collaboration, the art teachers borrowed teaching ideas from each other to try out in their own classrooms. The team worked in pairs to exchange ideas that they could try in their own art room. At this point collaboration was largely perceived as a source of taking ideas from others to improve, or at any rate, to vary their own practice.

In conclusion, it seems clear that the issues discussed during the joint meeting were taken directly from the private sessions. The subtle difference was that being in the midst of other colleagues and sharing similar problems, appeared to help the group members to express their opinions more confidently and with greater conviction. They increasingly offered critical judgments. This was not so evident during the private sessions. One of the

teachers who was a bit hesitant about expressing her ideas openly during the private sessions, clearly felt strengthened by the group support at the joint meeting and became more outspoken. Teacher initiative was more evident at this meeting as well.

The impact of the first joint meeting is not to be underestimated. Even though some support had been offered in private meetings during the preliminary stage, the first joint meeting led to the realization that joint effort produces practical and useful help. Furthermore, by the end of the first joint meeting, this realization elicited a sense of relief on the part of the teachers. They were smiling and seemed to have enjoyed conversing about problems which had been a burden to them for a very long time, but which they had never had an opportunity to discuss before. It is important to note that the feeling of security was growing as members got better acquainted.

Processes

In this section I would like to highlight the process of discussion which characterized the early stage in group work. I shall first consider the circumstances which encourage teachers to discuss their concerns with colleagues, before looking at the way in which discussion can allow participants to change and develop their existing beliefs and practices.

Discussion seemed to offer a valuable experience to the teachers who participated because their ideas were allowed to flow out truthfully and openly with no reservations. The elements of openness and truthfulness were allowed to flourish and teachers' perspectives moved to deeper levels of thought during the discussion process. This was due to the no-obstacles principle which had prevailed in the discussion process. It consisted of the following:

1. The participants realized that their views were not to be classified as right or wrong, but they were to be part of a process which collected all views in order to build a new shared language with which to communicate on a common level. Teacher views were offered in order to become part of a complete view of the group.

2. The views of art teachers in Cyprus usually have to survive the scrutiny of the art inspector who compares an idea expressed against the art education philosophy that has been established in our educational system. This scrutiny of practitioners' ideas against this unrealistic measure of an established teaching philosophy (based on theoretical and not practical values), is experienced as a threat by teachers and has the effect of stopping the flow of teacher views and suggestions relating to problematic areas in the classroom. These teachers had not previously been allowed to question the old established theories in art education for that would create a threatening

situation for the art inspector. It would throw the already established criteria for effective art teaching off balance. The presence of the inspector tends to stop the free flow of teachers' ideas.

3. A further obstacle within the inspector's teacher development sessions is that teachers are asked to offer success formulas without examining the problems first. This makes them feel pressured into offering opinions at that particular time and place without giving them first the chance to study the issues. This unrealistic pressure did not exist at the joint meeting.

4. Ideas expressed by the teachers were not characterized as being final formulas for success, but as possibilities to investigate and experiment with in order to seek solutions. The idea that teachers were not asked to offer final and correct responses to the problems discussed, but only hints to experiment with, worked as an open invitation to constructive suggestions. This type of useful discussion never takes place at seminars or workshops where there is usually a monologue from the inspector or guest speaker. The teachers are not invited to offer their suggestions. The speaker prefers to remain safe within the boundaries of the topics he/she can understand and therefore control.

Compared to the conditions created at official seminars, a safe environment based on equal relationships was created at the joint meeting. This gave the teachers the security of expressing their views, their criticisms, their fears about their own limitations and ability to cope with problems, and their doubts about the already established theories of the profession. More clear and direct views were expressed by the participants as opposed to incomplete statements expressed at seminars.

"We teach....but we don't know whether students get anything out of it. We get students to draw and paint, we show them paintings from art history, but they don't understand the purpose behind all of these....no specific objectives are involved" (Tasia, joint meeting, December, 93). No teacher would dare make the above comment at a seminar. It would reveal her weaknesses, and label her as an incompetent teacher. The inspector would link it back to the established art curriculum. Again, it would lead to no constructive developments.

Overall, it was indicated that teachers offered their views willingly because they felt safe, their ideas were valued, and taken seriously. They were to become part of a bigger plan which aimed at changing some of the ways of their profession.

The second feature of discussion which I wish to highlight concerns the extent to which discussion encourages reflection on existing ideas. During the discussion at the first meeting each person's ideas were confronted by those of others. Each member offered her own perspective. A definite challenge of view-

points took place due to the "bouncing" around of ideas. Following this, many aspects of one idea developed because when an idea is challenged by many viewpoints it becomes analyzed in more aspects.

At the end of the discussion however, ideas were still vague and general and could not lead to action. Mainly, space was provided for the expression of many viewpoints relating to the problems of teaching. As a result, a set of questions were formed, naming overall problematic areas that were worth looking into through the classroom research procedure. Why do students feel that they are not learning properly in the art class? Why do certain established theories of art teaching not work in practical terms? Could more useful ones be developed? Do things work for students in the art class? For how many students? What can we do to get others involved?

A lot of stress and anxiety came through during the process of discussion as the participants expressed the kind of problems which teachers get trapped into and cannot deal with on their own. This stress and trapped feelings echo Rudduck's reference to the "hurt" experienced by teachers. She argues "that most teachers, given the opportunity to reflect on their experience, would find some 'hurt' that routine or overload leads them to endure rather than to examine. Consciousness of the hurt is most likely to recur as teachers refocus their professional values and goals, admit their political consciousness, and recognize any disturbing gaps between aspiration and present experience. The hurt may be expressed in simple terms but nonetheless forceful terms" (Rudduck, 1991, pp. 93 - 94). The hurt Rudduck describes came through in these teachers' responses. That is probably why the members of the group were making sweeping statements this early in the collaborative process.

Outcomes

I want to argue that the no-obstacles discussion process allowed teachers to ask questions which reached beyond the surface of the way things appeared. During the initial group discussion, teachers managed to question their teaching effectiveness and the art curriculum as it related to practical every-day teaching problems. This was the first step away from stalemate. From this emerged a sense of the possibilities of collaborative work as opposed to isolated work.

Questioning one's own teaching

At the initial meeting the team combined efforts to develop a set of penetrating questions through which to investigate their teaching practice. "The joint meeting affected me because it made me think. Some good things surfaced. A good basis was formed to make one question. As long as the

teacher questions, the more improved she becomes in her profession. She becomes free from the taken-for-granted and goes forward to make new discoveries" (Tasoula, November, 10, 93). Tasoula was talking about the motivation created by sharing problems. Listening to other colleagues expressing their own perspectives on issues gave her a chance to become aware of her own limitations.

Rudduck offers more relevant comments. She refers to three teachers, "....who recently joined a university-based development project that was focusing on new teaching and learning strategies in science in the secondary curriculum. Each one opted to join the team because he had, as it turned out, already experienced the 'hurting', although none had, until interviewed, fully articulated and understood the basis of that hurt" (Rudduck, 1991, p. 94). It seemed that the participants in the first joint meeting had a similar experience.

Developing a consensus on major issues, such as the ineffectiveness of the art curriculum, made them feel less anxious about not following it. Furthermore, a consensus on the ineffectiveness of the inspector as an evaluator of their teaching made them question the validity of the inspector's role in improving their teaching. Because many views were heard and deeply examined, it became possible to indicate what the crucial issues might be and justify their concerns about them.

Some of the members' comments exhibited the initial questioning regarding their teaching effectiveness. Tasia expressed her frustration over her students' lack of concentration in their art work. Based on Tasia's comments, more teaching-related questioning followed by other colleagues expressing concern regarding the purpose behind their own teaching. The questioning highlighted the issues of student learning and established art teaching theories. Realizing and articulating the problems, seemed to move them a step forward towards improving them.

"By listening to other art teachers one starts to question one's own teaching", Carol exclaimed. "We all had different training in art. Some of us were trained in interior decorating, design and technical drawing. Others in fine arts. Some teachers teach art from a fine art point of view and others as design or decoration. Listening to each other might give us some input into our own teaching" (Tasia, joint session, 1993).

Furthermore, Sophia H. (elementary school teacher) had this to say: "The belief that I had for a long time that the art teaching training I had at the Pedagogical Academy in Cyprus was static, boring and a non-creative way to teaching art was reinforced by this experience. Before the idea of teaching art to elementary students really frightened me. I thought I needed to have a lot of knowledge. Now looking at art teaching after this new experience it appears a lot more interesting. This new outlook made

me love my subject more and this will help me to teach it better" (joint session, 1993).

Outcomes of the first joint meeting however, seemed to indicate that this initial questioning on teaching practice, was not an easy task for the group. They questioned their teaching because they were motivated to do so by the no-obstacles process of discussion.

Questioning the art curriculum

The process of discussion allowed teachers to question the art curriculum from the practical perspective of their teaching. To them the art curriculum just does not work. When curriculum problems are discussed at the inspector's seminars, suggestions are made about how teachers in the USA or the UK are teaching art. The problem with this approach, the teachers commented, was that they were not given the opportunity to discuss these suggestions and think of ways of adapting them so they would fit the Cypriot educational system.

During the first joint meeting, the participants were examining possibilities for a more suitable art curriculum which could be implemented and not confuse the teachers. They agreed that the design and development of a new curriculum should be based on outcomes of extensive research into the practical problems they are experiencing in the classroom. A curriculum can be effective only if it addresses the real concerns of the profession.

There was a pragmatic sense of awareness of the problems which exist in the present curriculum. The main questions formulated related to the simplification and clarification of the art curriculum through possibly a course description. Clearly through this initial questioning, the teachers were challenging the success-story that was claimed for the official curriculum. This was a direct challenge towards the inability of the curriculum to solve the practitioner's teaching problems. When the team members suggested the need for organized learning experiences in the curriculum they did not imply a static view of a curriculum. They meant to set priorities for each grade, and give the sense of learning-building to the students.

The team members were assuming the roles of both researchers as well as developers of the art curriculum. Stenhouse (1975) comments that the curriculum developer should explore problems rather than offer solutions. The team felt that the current art curriculum developers in Cyprus developed an ambitious curriculum which offered solutions to problems which do not exist in their teaching. Stenhouse's comments on the curriculum issue become useful again. He commented that "Its dilemmas should be important dilemmas. Its shortcomings should reflect real and important difficulties... Such a developmental style points towards a tradition of curriculum research which focuses on the study of problems and responses to them rather on the

invention of ambitious solutions before the problems have been properly studied" (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 125).

At the end of the meeting the team agreed that the art curriculum should be interpreted according to the level of students' interest in art, artistic abilities and age; number of students, availability of facilities and time allotted for art in the school schedule. Moreover, the teachers agreed that the design of an alternative art curriculum should start by looking at the practical problems of their teaching first and adapt what is to be taught, at what depth, how it should be taught, to whom, and for how long.

I had been apprehensive about introducing the art curriculum as an issue for discussion at the first meeting. I proved to be wrong because the team members brought up the issue of the ineffectiveness of the curriculum as one of the main of problems in their teaching. They did not use sophisticated words, but discussed the curriculum in terms of the way they experienced it in their every-day teaching.

The group's decision to try to change the art curriculum through problem-solving was quite an achievement for Cyprus because the practitioners are told repeatedly at the teacher development courses of the Pedagogical Institute, that the design of the curriculum is the 'business' of an official group of experts of the Ministry of Education and therefore far beyond their expertise. Nevertheless, the team members claimed their right to offer curriculum changes.

The possibilities of collaborative work

Even though this was the first joint meeting, I do not wish to underestimate the importance or the value of this initial joint experience for the practitioners involved. At this group meeting teachers felt more convinced that collaboration might work. They had agreed to collaborative work during the Preliminary stage, but that did not assure the full success of collaboration. Now, having had the experience of discussion with other art teachers, they felt more confident about the likely success of a group effort. What motivated the teachers to move on and plan for future meetings was a sense of the potential of collaborative work which they received at this meeting.

Color Plate 2.3 Teachers at first joint meeting

Stage C: Group Establishment

Introduction

This stage reflects the transactions that took place at the second joint meeting. However, before the second joint meeting team members were gaining valuable experience by researching problems in their own classrooms. The process did not stop until the second meeting.

The character of the group was changing. At this second joint meeting it seemed that the difficult task of bringing the teachers together was resolved. At this stage, the difficult task for me as the change facilitator was to invent tools in order to sustain the high level of interest. The teachers needed to be kept stimulated constantly. Handling a group of teachers was clearly becoming more difficult than handling individual teachers.

The participants had moved from Stage A in which they were attracted to the "I am the decision-maker" role; from there they had matured into the "I can solve my classroom problems" role which built-up their interest considerably. The final and more attractive role towards which they must now move was the "we can bring about change in art teaching" role in phase II C. They needed to acquire this third and more assertive role in order to be able to initiate action.

The second joint meeting took place in January, 4, 94. In color plate: 2.4, the team can be seen discussing issues at the second joint meeting. It lasted for two hours, from five until seven. All the members were present. Two of the teachers stayed until late at night discussing a variety of issues relating to the problems of the art teaching profession. The agenda of this meeting included the following: to look over the minutes of the first joint meeting, to see how team members worked in the meantime and present to the group any work accomplished, and finally to evaluate how much each member had developed in their thinking and to plan future meetings.

The minutes of the first joint meeting were given to the teachers to examine. The handing-out of the notes of that meeting and the way in which they were organized served as tools devised to make the members of the group feel that they were in control and give them a sense of accomplishment. Their general ideas took on importance by becoming the issues for discussion. This gave them the sense that they were building at each joint meeting and that they were moving a step forward. They were not starting all over again a vague dialogue about the general problems of the profession. It appeared to be a constructive procedure. It worked as an incentive to make the teachers feel that they were needed in this group process and that their views were valued since their ideas could lead to

long term objectives for change. I could not afford to allow the meetings to drift along without meaning.

After the teachers were asked to confirm the minutes, they went on to comment and analyze further certain aspects of them. Reflecting on what was expressed at the first joint meeting, the team members realized that they had enough material to work on. They felt that they must make some choices on which to focus their attention. They began making some rational selections from the discussion of the previous meeting. The organized notes of the first meeting helped teachers to move on to a more constructive discussion.

Problems in student learning were now seen as a key issue because the participants felt that this might relate to the ineffectiveness of both the art curriculum and the art teacher. Investigating ways of addressing student lack of interest in art might lead to suggestions about teaching art more effectively and about a more effective art curriculum. Since art is a visual subject, the team agreed that the research into student learning should start on student artwork where the student product could be seen and the process behind it discussed and analyzed by each teacher offering the methodology she used. The team managed to embark on a type of action that could allow them to collect tangible evidence. As Tasia said at the second joint meeting; "we can't keep on talking in general terms. At the next meeting let's all bring in some of our students' works to discuss". This was suggested at the first joint meeting as well.

At the first joint meeting it was agreed by the participants that art teachers need to prove to others (parents, students, ministry officials) that learning does take place in the art room. This argument raised the issue of art teachers' ideology in the second joint meeting. Tasia said: "Can we convince the ministry officials that art is an important school subject and how; so far we've been struggling among ourselves to show some nice art work created by our students. This though does not seem to be enough to convince anyone of the value of art as a learning experience".

The team members brought up the issue of a new art curriculum for the art elective courses for high school students. The team agreed on a design-oriented curriculum to cover the needs of the new technology in combination with aesthetics in fine arts. Old ideas of how some of the members used to teach design were discussed. Through the discussion, many teaching ideas about design problems, tried by the teachers in previous years but now put aside, came to the surface. Niki commented that "without discussion, teaching ideas are actually discarded and not evaluated for effectiveness; without support a teacher does not try new ideas".

This discussion allowed the participants to borrow ideas about design lessons from each other to try out in their own art rooms. Furthermore, they all

agreed to Tasia's suggestion that they bring student works on design problems to the next meeting for joint reflection.

A turning point in this meeting was Tasoula's valuable contribution in demonstrating the value of student feedback. She showed to the group a set of questions designed by her own students who had responded enthusiastically to her request that they come up with questions to evaluate what they had learned in a particular lesson. The questions that the students wrote are set out below (Data: 2.11).

Data: 2.11 A questionnaire for my art class

Question 1:
Do you enjoy art class? Yes or No? Explain your answer. If you do not like art class what is the reason? Choose one of the following:
- teaching method
- the teacher
- the art class in general
- something else

Question 2:
Do you consider art as a secondary subject which doesn't deserve the student's full attention? Yes or No? Explain your answer. Do you spend any time on art outside the art class?

Question 3:
Do you understand the meaning of the artistic terms: similar values, positive and negative space? If yes, explain the terms. If not, how do you explain your lack of understanding of these terms? In your opinion, were you able to successfully express them in your work?

Question 4:
Do you believe that the class in general managed to create a good composition in their art work?

Question 5:
Do you believe that you would have done better if you didn't have to work around a specific theme?

Question 6:
Was the lesson worth the effort you put into it? Did you try your best? What did you get out of this particular work?

Tasoula read the questions with enthusiasm. She said that she could not believe that her second-graders in junior high school could come up with such clever questions. She said that she was planning to photocopy the questions and give them to all her second graders to answer. Carol and Niki also produced actual samples of student questionnaires and views on student feedback. Carol presented some of the questionnaires filled in by her students and read to the group some of the answers. Furthermore, Niki expressed her amazement when she received some interesting feed-

back from her senior high school students during casual interviews. She asked them what they expected to get out of the course. "I got a variety of views from the students and some great ideas which surprised me. They gave me input on ideas I should be teaching them".

At the close of the meeting I gave each of the team members a short questionnaire (Data: 2.12) which asked them to respond to the following:

Data: 2.12 A questionnaire for the participants

How is this research project helping me personally in relation to:
- Problem-solving?
- Teaching improvement?

How do I feel about these:
- Joint effort (collaboration)?
- Bringing about change?
- Group support?

The teachers took the questionnaire home and thought about the questions. Carol responded after a few days, with the following written comments: "I feel excited when I am able to meet and discuss matters concerning my work with other artists. As an artist is what I think I once was, and on occasion remind myself that I still am, if not in practical terms, then in the ways through which I think and work in the classroom. Unfortunately art teaching as it is in Cyprus, it can lead to a feeling of *what is it I am doing*? The group has given me hope for improvement in some aspects. For five years I have been working at the American Academy without contact with other art teachers. This team contact has offered me a new motivation. Art is a creative subject, and it is essential to come in contact with other art teachers and talk about creative matters of teaching art. Having had a very healthy relationship with art teachers whilst teaching in Wales, I know how supportive and helpful we were to each other; we (potter, textile designer, painter, sculptor) all got together and came up with good ideas. Now I feel our group should also be a meeting point for a general discussion. Each member's weak and strong points could come together to achieve a whole which may be used in the classroom".

Tasoula offered interesting responses as well. "This research project gives me the opportunity to express my concerns and anxieties in the implementation of my teaching. I'm sure that most colleagues in our profession would like to find solutions to the same problems and difficulties I am expressing. I believe that frequent group meetings will help us to analyze deeply and effectively the sources of the difficulties we encounter in our classrooms. At the same time, we are given the opportunity to offer suggestions and to discuss our worries in a way that should promote the improvement of our teaching practice. I feel that the frequent and continuous group

meetings are absolutely essential to finding answers to our burning questions".

The real objective of the teacher questionnaire was to recapitulate the main issues for the teachers. Again, I felt that losing sight of the substantial issues would have been harmful to the group process. My main objective was not to collect data on how teachers felt at this early stage, but to remind the team members of why they were getting together and combining efforts. It was not taken for granted, especially at these initial stages, that participants understood all the issues that came up in the discussion.

Finally, after their deliberations, the group members decided to meet again. They agreed to call each other and arrange another meeting. At this early stage I did not insist on arranging the meeting dates beforehand. That was left up to the team members to call each other and arrange it at their leisure. This was one of the factors which motivated the participants to move on. It appeared to be a comfortable process.

At the next meeting each team member would bring old students' works for discussion in order to form, as a group, ideas about the needs of the new art curriculum. The objective was to look into the type of art lessons that would be appropriate for the more design-oriented curriculum. The teachers felt the need for getting together as a group. They also felt that they understood a lot better what was going on. They were now able to initiate action on their own.

Processes

The issues discussed during the second joint meeting and the way these were treated by the members were significant in indicating a movement from "discussion" to a more mature and productive control of teacher talk. I would like to suggest that, at this stage, the process of discussion highlighted in stage B, was giving way to a productive period I choose to call the communication process.

During discussion, there was a desperate cry for much needed solutions. Many problems and issues were named in a period of "letting-off steam" and expressing anger. The thinking exercised by the teachers at this stage was not directed towards clarifying nor focusing-in on issues discussed. There was no evidence of continuity in discussion. Ideas talked about were still at the point of general suggestions and viewpoints. The team members were not able to initiate action.

In stage C, however, a shift was detected in the way teachers were interpreting the issues. Some issues were seen as possibly interrelated; some issues gained clarity; some developed importance for the team's work and

some issues faded into insignificance and were put aside. The new interpretation allowed the team to focus its deliberations on important items. The shift in the interpretation converted mere discussion of ideas into communicating with ideas. Teacher talk became focused and purposeful. It exhibited continuity in contrast to the earlier discussion process where mere dialogue did not lead to any directions for investigation. Due to the new developments, team members' interest was raised considerably.

At this point a shift in the types of problems discussed was evident as well. Problems were unfolding from small isolated classroom problems relating to such matters as the understanding of the human figure in art to the overall problems in student learning and the curriculum. During the discussion process, the team exhibited a mood full of frustration and anger.

In the later communication process this was taken over by a feeling of calmness, restraint, seriousness and a more organized thinking over the issues. As a result of moving on to this more sophisticated "communicating with ideas" the team was ready to make more serious decisions. Problems in student learning were now seen as a "key" issue to focus on. The rationale behind this decision was that investigating ways of solving students' loss of interest in art might lead to suggestions about teaching art more effectively as well as ideas about a more effective art curriculum. Table: 2.1 set out below summarizes the problems and decisions discussed in each process.

Table: 2.1 Discussion - Communication

Stage: B - Discussion	Stage: C - Communication
The problems raised are as follows:	The decisions made were:
1. Students are reluctant to accept art.	1. Teachers will research levels of student learning on specific lessons using student self-evaluation questionnaires
2. There is nothing in the art curriculum to specify what is to be taught in each grade.	2. Through student work teaching methodologies will be discussed as they relate to the needs of the curriculum.
3. Teaching ideas get repeated each year.	
4. There is a lack of focus in learning experiences.	
5. There is no continuity in student learning.	
6. There is no organization in our teaching.	

7. The art curriculum is problematic; it is too overloaded, too ambitious, cannot be implemented.	
8. What would be an appropriate curriculum for large classrooms, for students who show no interest in art and for limited time?	

Figure: 2.1 seeks to illustrate the development from the process of discussion to communication. The shape of the inverted cone indicates the vagueness and generalities which characterized teachers' ideas from the beginning of the discussion process right through the maturing stage of communication which signifies the initiation of action.

Outcomes

In the light of the process of communication discussed above, the teachers were able to develop their own definition of the type of change they wished to achieve. Their own interpretation of the process they were involved in, was becoming steadily clearer. In this section I shall discuss these interpretations in terms of first, as an understanding the value of collaborative research as a means of developing the curriculum; and second, the emergence of newly-acquired attitudes which enhanced the participants' role.

I have already described how in stage B team members were questioning the art curriculum ineffectiveness through a practical perspective. In stage C, teachers' responses revealed that collaborative research about these classroom problems appeared to be an effective way of investigating and discovering solutions.

The group found investigating class problems through collaborative reflection on research a logical approach to finding possible solutions for the curriculum, and one which was not threatening. The team agreed to embark on the research because it gave them a sense of control over their actions. "Researching into problems through things I know and understand is a lot less scary than attending seminars and being asked to offer immediate opinions on items which seem irrelevant, confusing and foreign to me" (Sophia H.).

The inspector had asserted on many occasions that the art curriculum is "okay" It is simply the teachers' fault for not implementing it "correctly". However, many questions remained unanswered in the teachers' minds about implementing the curriculum "correctly". This issue has never been discussed at any point at seminars or among groups of teachers. The idea of researching one's own

classroom problems seemed to offer the best chance they had had in a very long time of finding answers to teaching problems.

Believing that research and student feedback possessed the potential to solve problems, the team decided that a new curriculum should be designed based on the outcomes of a research procedure to which all the team members would contribute thus forming a multi-faceted approach as a basis on which to expand their investigation of the curriculum. Student questionnaires were suggested as the initial research method. More specifically, it was decided to research levels of learning in students after a particular lesson by giving them questionnaires to answer. It was felt that by getting feedback on what students had learned or not learned from an art lesson would offer valuable information in finding weaknesses in the teaching methodologies as well as in the design of the curriculum.

In addition, each team member would be given the opportunity to present and discuss their own students' work. By looking at the actual products and by each teacher presenting her teaching methodology to that particular lesson, the team thought that this would enable them to think about the needs of the curriculum.

Overall, a new attitude was beginning to emerge. Even though this was only one of the initial joint meetings for the group, it is important not to underestimate the value of what had been discussed and decided on by the team at this time. There was a strong sense of forward movement. The teachers were becoming more in control in what they were deciding and trying to test in classrooms. They had a basis for their decisions. They were able to initiate some action on their own. Moreover, team members were able to take the initiative to call for future meetings, to develop student questionnaires and to suggest research problems for future investigation. This advance seemed to coincide with newly acquired traits in thinking and in attitudes relating to their pedagogy and the curriculum.

Based on the responses I received to the short questionnaires issued at the conclusion of the second joint meeting, a new group attitude was forming. A new openness was replacing the previous culture of isolation. And this offered the opportunity to discover new ways of looking at teaching problems, thus leading to possibilities for improvement.

Reflections on Phase II

The following is a brief comment on Phase II as a whole. The three stages presented: the Preliminary stage to collaboration, the first joint meeting and the second joint meeting made up Phase II. This chapter has explored the development of the way in which the practitioners were brought together as a working group. Furthermore, the two first joint meetings were dis-

cussed in detail to reveal the teachers' responses to their initial group effort. Those responses were analyzed in order to reveal how the participants managed to move from simply chatting about problems, to communicating and finally to initiating some type of action on problems.

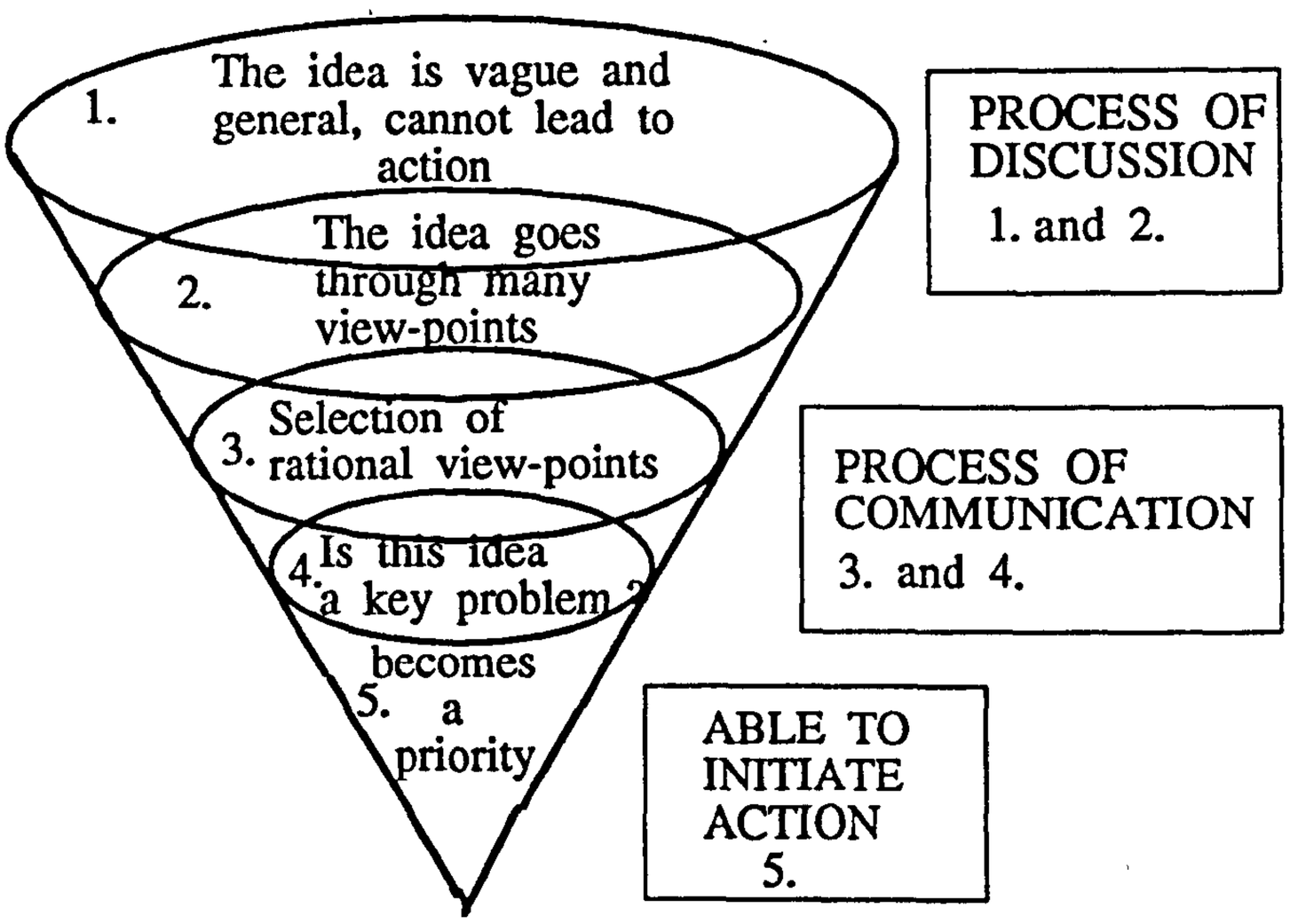
My concern in presenting the first and second joint meetings as two separate stages, was to examine closely what happened to these practitioners when they were engaged in talk; how this process of talking allowed for the development of an effective bond between the members of the group. It seemed that mere talking had to move on to a more mature stage before any decisions on action could be reached.

Briefly put, during the Preliminary stage, the teachers discovered their right to express their views. At the first joint meeting through the discussion process, the team members suggested many issues that disturbed them. And finally at the second joint meeting, through the process of communication, the group focused-in on specific problems and was able to reach a decision on action. This initial action established a way forward into the very engaged action research work of Phase III.

Color Plate 2.4

Teachers at second joint meeting

Figure 2.1 From Discussion to Communication



Chapter: **6**

Phase III
Action Research in Classrooms

Phase III lasted from February, 94 until early October, 94. Many meetings took place; private, small and joint meetings as well as telephone conversations among teachers. Team meetings and contacts became more frequent as the group process and teacher awareness developed into maturity.

The meetings took place at the private homes of the team members. The private environment that a home offered made teachers feel more at ease and relaxed. They felt safer getting away from the official overtone of schools. The atmosphere was pleasant and everyone could loosen up and offer their viewpoints freely. The teachers preferred to get away from schools and discuss problems in a more personal environment which contributed to their overall willingness to collaborate and to the development of their interest.

The main focus of Phase III was action research in classrooms where team members gained more control over the process they were involved in. Phase III will be presented in three separate stages:

Stage A: Team members Plan the Implementation Plan. (Feb., 94 - April, 94)
Stage B: Feedback from Action Research. (May, 94 - July, 94)
Stage C: The Building Stage. (August, 94 - October, 94)

Each stage will be discussed using the following plan of reporting:
Introduction-meetings, main topics and group work procedures
Processes -activities teachers experienced during each stage
Outcomes-developments in teacher growth and awareness due to their involvement in the processes

Once again, the illustrations for each stage will be found at the end of the relevant section.

Overall the developments in this period from February to October, 94, will demonstrate that stage A was a period of strengthening group commitment through the development of a common task; stage B was the crucial activity of collecting feedback from action research in real classroom conditions and stage C was the time when awareness about classroom research matured in teachers and created independence in them for initiating new professional goals in the future.

Stage A: Strengthening Group Commitment - Team Members Plan the Implementation Plan

Introduction:

Stage A lasted from February, 94 through to April, 94. During this period most of the planning of classroom research took place. At this stage we can see how the process of problem and strategy development altered and shifted in emphasis as a result of frequent discussions and a related maturing of awareness about the issues.

One of the main issues defined and dealt with by the teachers, at this stage, was a search for ways to stimulate student interest in learning about art and a growing capacity to alter the process of teaching according to student response. The teachers continued to seek student feedback in various ways from their classrooms in order to test reactions to the new idea of getting involved in classroom affairs by offering their own viewpoints through questionnaires.

During this stage, the members began to enjoy the meetings. They enjoyed coming together as a team and talking over common problems. The atmosphere was always pleasant and meetings lasted for more than two hours. Moreover the joint sessions appeared to be more purposeful.

Processes

Examining the activities that took place during this stage, it can be inferred that the teachers experienced the processes of problem-development, student feedback and team feedback.

Problem-development process

This process refers to the common problem that the group members formulated and tested in their classrooms through action research procedures. The process by which the group sought for and defined their problem was a significant part of the research experience. Moreover the problem shifted in emphasis right through the process.

Initially, one of the team members suggested that it would be a good idea if the group selected a specific theme such as, the human figure, the face, a still life and so on. The group then would devise a teaching strategy to be used in all classroom situations. An evaluation procedure would follow using questionnaires in order to discover how each group of students reacted to the same method of teaching. Through this evaluation process the teachers were hoping to discover which teaching method led to the most favorable reaction so that they could make appropriate adjustments to match the character of each group of students. The teachers agreed that findings based on this experience

would be most helpful to new teachers as well in giving them guidance in their own careers. (meeting in February, 94).

The team members decided that a more concrete basis was needed for discussing art teaching problems. Therefore, for the first time since the group met actual student work was brought to the meetings to be discussed. Discussion centered on the process behind the product. The teachers would comment on how they approached each lesson and how students reacted to it. They focused on teaching processes which stimulated student interest in a particular lesson and the reasons behind it. Through this particular discussion, they discovered that certain teaching ideas offered by colleagues presented possible solutions to problems they had encountered in their own classrooms. The team members decided to try out each other's ideas in their own classroom and report on whether or not they had proved helpful.

At this particular meeting, they focused on work which used the human facial characteristics as interpretations of shapes, lines, textures and colors in rhythmic movements. This approach was suggested by Carol who works more on design problems rather than fine art problems with her students at the American Academy.

This was a new approach for the other teachers. They decided to take on the challenge. This was to be watercolor work which the teachers felt could be used as a basis for an effective lesson. The team decided that they wanted to teach the artistic elements (color, shape, line, texture and value) through a theme that the students could easily identify with, that would allow for personal expression and imagination and be fun at the same time. The work chosen can be seen in Color Plate: 3.1, work 1.

During the next joint meeting (March, 94) more student work relating to the chosen theme was brought in to be discussed. The members had agreed that they needed more feedback from each other on the selected theme. They brought in more student work relating to the face. These varied according to age group, level of artistic ability, media used and viewpoint taken. A sample of student work brought in at this meeting can be seen in Color Plate: 3.1, works 2 and 3.

Each teacher's instructions regarding the abstracted face had varied. Tasoula had asked her students to express themselves by using a combination of cut newspapers, paper collage and pastel to create a work which combined a face inspired by Picasso's works and a decorative background suggested by works of Matisse. Tasia introduced to her students the human face as an expression of simplified abstractions of rectangular and square shapes resembling works by Paul Klee. Sophia H. presented elementary school work based on the theme of creating a human face by using different fruit to match the shapes of facial characteristics; for example drawing a banana for a mouth and two cherries for eyes. The students were allowed to make their own

choices. Finally, Niki showed high school students' paintings inspired by Picasso's work, "Woman in front of Mirror" (1932) emphasizing a double image of the same face and using mixed-media. Carol's students were inspired by the concept of theatrical masks and clown faces.

The group decided to formulate a common task as follows:
Problem: The face would be exaggerated through the creative use of shapes, lines, textures and colors stressing an original and imaginative composition.
Objective: To help the students to become aware of the creative and expressive possibilities of the artistic elements in a balanced composition using the human face as an inspiration. The main objective was not the face, but to develop an understanding of these elements through the process of exaggerating the facial characteristics.
Visual aids: The abstracted face would be investigated through the works of contemporary artists as well as through African and ancient masks. Large visual aids would be constructed and put on display in the art room for all the students to study.
Materials: The students would be encouraged to combine all types of materials to make for an interesting final impression. The following were suggested: watercolor, oil pastel, colored pencils, magic markers, fabric, yarn.
Procedure: Each teacher would teach the lesson in similar ways and report back to the group any difficulties each had in her own unique situation. The data collected in each particular art room, would be discussed by the group and used to modify the teaching approach according to the audience it was applied to. The team members would be working with students in elementary school, junior and senior high school plus the American Academy.

The team searched into art history books and into art magazines to find works which reflected the problem they defined. African masks exhibiting an unusual use of lines, textures and shapes in dynamic and expressive exaggerations of the face were discovered as well as many contemporary paintings and sculptures which presented clearly the use of lines, textures and shapes. The team members selected artists' works that they felt would present the problem to the students most clearly. They were concerned about the type of visual aids they might use in order to facilitate their students' understanding of the problem.

In the process of discussing a number of student works from previous years, the teachers agreed that there was evidence of a lack of understanding on the part of the students about the way to express themselves in artistic terms. This they felt related to the weaknesses of teachers themselves in explaining those artistic elements through proper visual means so that they could be better understood by the students. Visual aids became an issue in effective teaching. The visual aids chosen for this particular lesson can be seen in Color Plates: 3.2 and 3.3. In Color Plate: 3.4 team members can be seen looking at the works of Carol's.

However, the teaching procedure to be used in this "face lesson", was steadily becoming more important to the teachers. The emphasis of the original problem was shifting. The testing of the uniqueness of each classroom situation changed to a new problem. During a joint meeting, (March, 94) the teachers developed three main concerns: to enhance understanding of art concepts in students, to give them more independence in their working habits, and to get all students involved in art work. The discussion centered around the search for the best ways to stimulate learning in students and "not simply work towards making a nice pretty picture". An art lesson should be more oriented to problem-solving. This meant that the students needed to be solving artistic problems in their work in order that they might learn and understand the basic concepts underlying artistic expression.

The team members agreed that art teaching as it is now , appeared to be too abstract for students. "The artistic concepts cannot be understood just by hearing about them. The students must have more personal contact with the ideas presented in the art room by the teacher" (Niki, March, 94). The teachers were highly concerned about the value that this project would offer their students. They felt that it would be supplying them with something more in order to enhance their understanding of artistic concepts and to give them an immediate awareness of the lesson's objectives. These concerns led to a final decision to design a working paper to be given to all the students.

The new teaching strategy of supplying each student with a working paper, was intended to address the following problems. Students experience the difficulty in remembering what they are told to do by the art teacher. "Students get me so upset. I have been telling then certain things for two years and still they don't remember anything. What am I going to do with them"? (Tasoula, April, 94). Students also have difficulty in understanding the art concepts. "Students delay in getting into an idea suggested by the teacher. I might be talking for an hour and in the end the students still don't know what to do and they ask questions all the time. I have to repeat everything a hundred times". (Niki, April, 94). Also students delay drafting a visual idea based on the problem they are working on. "They don't know what to draw. They need a lot of individual coaxing by me. I am on my feet all day in class going around to each student" (Sophia P. April, 94).

Out of this discussion came the following questions:

- Would students remember art ideas better if they were given something "concrete" such as a piece of paper to hold on which provided them with the lesson's objectives and the criteria for evaluating their work?
- Would students get a quicker start on their drawing or painting if they were supplied with some visual images on paper, as examples, in order to help them to grasp the idea better?

As a result of these new questions, the group thought it best to design three different types of working papers to be given to students to keep in their files. These could be referred to at any time while they were working. The first paper was to include the problem, the objectives to be achieved, the materials to be used and the points of emphasis in the problem. The purpose of this was to help them realize that they should be seeking to solve artistic problems in their works and not merely painting a pretty picture.

The second paper consisted of visual examples of faces abstracted through the artistic elements. The team felt that this would help the students to understand in visual terms the artistic problem they were asked to work on. A third paper was suggested in the form of a self-evaluation questionnaire consisting of a series of questions directed to the students concerning the quality of their work. The self-evaluation questionnaires which would be answered when the work was finished served two purposes: one, for the teacher to collect information on how students perceived their own work and to compare it with her own; and second for the students to become involved in their own evaluation and offer comments on how they thought they did. For samples of the three papers in question, see Data: 3.1-3.3.

The worksheets that were to be developed by the team aimed, to lead students to a process of asking and answering questions about their own work without the teacher's constant supervision. This would hopefully get the students more involved, allow them to study the objectives and be able to take part in a fruitful and meaningful discussion with the teacher about the task they were asked to undertake.

Student-feedback process

As the team had experimented with student evaluations, they agreed that it was a complex procedure which involved several successive stages: a general testing period to assess whether students liked to offer their ideas through general questionnaires, approaching students with caution; oral casual interviews or general questions on what they prefer in art to make it a more interesting subject. Then followed a more serious and confident approach using written questionnaires on evaluating teacher's effectiveness on a specific lesson. This led to a more focused-in approach using written student self-evaluation questionnaires for each lesson.

Finally, by stage A of Phase III, student feedback had become a permanent tool, built into each lesson. Most of the teachers in the group tried out various types of student questionnaires even before the common problem was decided on. "I am developing a lot of different types of questionnaires to get feedback from my students and I am also trying out new sitting arrangements in an attempt to stimulate interest in my students". (Sophia H., elementary school teacher). Carol collected useful data from her students through the questionnaires she designed. "Student feedback is an eye-opener. Through student

questionnaires, I discovered that students preferred certain lessons that I did not think they would react to favorably. My students felt very important and privileged to be given a questionnaire because their teacher was interested in finding out how they felt about their art work".

Teachers were discussing their feedback data at joint meetings. A frequent comment was that students did feel that the new experience of offering their views about classroom matters made them more a part of the decision-making that took place in the art room. The process of collecting feedback from students was a continuous process shifting in significance. Teachers felt that once they asked students what they liked about the art class, they wanted to move on to a more focused questioning.

Therefore, during a joint meeting in April 94, the team shifted the emphasis from the students evaluating the teacher's effectiveness to the students evaluating themselves. The question of whether students are learning in the art class came up frequently in teachers' discussions. They felt that this could be investigated by allowing the students themselves to show how they perceived their own learning in the art class.

Sophia H. was able to accomplish a lot with her elementary students. She managed to present to the group various types of self-evaluation questionnaires for each lesson that she taught. She designed self-evaluation questionnaires with lots of fun illustrations which seemed suitable for younger children in the third and fourth grades of elementary school. She observed that students enjoyed answering the questionnaires. They found them quite amusing. When they had finished with the writing part of it, they would color in the printed illustrations on their own.

She reported on the outcomes of student self-evaluation questionnaires: "The student self-evaluation questionnaires helped me to discover what students like, what they understand, what is comfortable for them and for me. I find this to be a continuous discovery not only in student learning but in teacher learning as well. I don't believe in ready formulas from books, but finding answers through experimenting. Students felt important because someone was asking their opinion about their work in the art room. They gained more respect for the subject of art". (Sophia H.).

Team-feedback process

Team feedback refers to a series of events which suggested that team members were developing into a mature and coherent group committed to improving the practical aspects of their teaching.

An indication of this was the way in which members more frequently asked colleagues for assistance in resolving their own teaching problems, borrowing ideas from each other or asking other colleagues to offer ideas on their

teaching problems. "I had absolutely no help from other sources to prepare me for teaching art in the elementary school. My training at the Pedagogical Academy and inspector's seminars offered me absolutely nothing to go on. The experience which has given me a boost and allowed me to develop my awareness and open doors for me, is my membership in the group." Sophia H. developed all her teaching ideas from group feedback in an attempt to build strategies for an art curriculum for elementary students since there was no suitable curriculum for this age-group in Cyprus. She developed lessons for her own students by experimenting with ideas and student work borrowed from the other art teachers in the team; she used to bring all her student work to be discussed by the group.

Through team feedback, teachers managed to get their own professional learning moving again. Carol borrowed student work from Tasoula and Tasia to show to her students. She believed that this work might help her overcome certain problems she had been having with her students. She thought that by showing to her own students work done by other secondary school students, this might help to convince them to get away from the stereotyped ideas they held about art. Carol reported that by showing Tasia's student work to her classes she was able to convince them to try new ideas.

Outcomes

In determining the outcomes of this particular stage, it appears that there were three significant developments: the development of a shared language; an increasing awareness of the student role in classroom matters; and a growing confidence in the group both as people and as teachers.

Developing a shared language

Through the experience of problem-development, the team managed to form a shared language relating to main issues of their profession. This meant that by identifying many problems as interrelated, team members could simplify problematic areas in art teaching by placing them in main categories and dealing with them as fewer unified problems rather than as many isolated problems. This made it much easier for teachers to control the planning of solutions. Figure: 3.1 seeks to illustrate the process of reaching the unified problems.

The group became increasingly aware of established teaching theories which did not seem to work in practice. The unanimous decision was to challenge the old theories and experiment with new ones which seemed more logical and presented possibilities for improvement. The general feeling was that the old theories had been put to the test for many years without effective result.

By examining the processes behind a student's artwork, group members developed a shared language about teaching problems and the students' role. The most significant outcome of this experience was learning to ask questions aris-

ing from student work which related not only to the final product but to the process as well. Team members agreed that it is through this type of questioning that teaching can be improved.

Moreover, through discussions on student art work, group members realized that they were dealing with similar problems and were able to re-evaluate their own teaching procedures. As Carol said in support of joint reflection, "coming in contact with other art teachers and hearing what they have to say about what they are doing in their art room, gives me a chance to check the validity of my own students' work".

Such developments of shared understanding are well attested in the literature. "Little (1982: 331) found that continuous job-embedded professional development was most likely to occur when:

> teachers engage in frequent, continuous, and increasingly concrete and precise talk about teaching practice....By such talk, teachers build up a shared language adequate to the complexity of teaching, capable of distinguishing one practice and its virtues from another, and capable of integrating large bodies of practice into distinct and sensible perspectives on the business of teaching. Other things being equal, the utility of collegial work and the vigor of experimentation with teaching is a direct function of the *concreteness, precision*, and *coherence* of the *shared language*" (Quoted in Smyth, 1991, p. 88).

The group's development in stage A, tends to confirm Little's statement. The frequent talks among group members relating to concrete problems of classroom practice, allowed them to build a shared language. This new discovery helped the team to deal with the complexities of art teaching and to see their way through defining a key problem to solve.

It is worth repeating that the existing art curriculum does not offer teachers a common ground for discussion. A shared language, however, could offer the basis for a new art curriculum that all art teachers could relate to despite their initial training or their varied perspectives on art teaching.

Figure: 3.2 seeks to illustrate the phenomenon of the emergence of a shared language through common elements in teachers' views about their professional problems. The various shapes represent the ways they perceive art teaching according to their art training and personal perspectives on art. The dark circle existing in all teachers' views represents the common views which emerged through the frequent group transactions. For example, two of the most common problems indicated, were students' lack of interest in art and finding ways to deal with the limited time and large number of students in the art room.

Awareness of the value of involving students in classroom matters

An obvious implication of the student-feedback process was the development of a wider and deeper appreciation of the potential value of student feedback in relation to teaching, learning, the solution of classroom problems, and curriculum research and development in general. Student feedback was encouraged through a process which gradually demanded more significant input from students leading to the need of developing more sophisticated student questionnaires; and from a general form of questioning to a permanent habit of student self-evaluation. Student involvement helped group members to begin to understand problems in student learning.

Before the group investigation into the potential of student feedback, a great gap existed between teacher and student. The teacher took for granted that the teacher talks and the student listens. The teacher is always effective in the way he/she approaches a lesson and it is the student's fault for not understanding. All classroom decisions are taken by the teacher and the student follows.

The group often discussed the previously existing link between the teacher's theory about the student's role and the problems which persist in their profession. "In other words, an educational problem denotes a gap between a practitioner's theory and practice" (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p. 112). Teachers' theories about the student's role were re-examined through student questionnaires leading to discoveries about the role of students in the process of improving teaching and learning.

Elliott (1991) argues that student feedback can lead to a useful comparison of the varied understandings about what is going on in a classroom. He refers to this process as triangulation. "The basic principle underlying the idea of triangulation is that of collecting observations/accounts of a situation (or some aspects of it) from a variety of angles or perspectives, and then comparing and contrasting them" (p. 82). This is clearly a good description of what was developing within the research activities of the group members. Sarason (1990) argues that such processes materially affect the balance of power between teachers and students, to be the great benefit of the latter. He writes "....the goal is to instill in students an understanding of a commitment to the classroom constitution, a sense of ownership, and an awareness that their opinions will be respected, even when not accepted" (pp. 85-86). This too was happening in the classrooms of group members. Rudduck, Chaplain and Wallace, eds. (1996) argue for the value of students' views on matters concerning their learning and evaluation.

Developing confidence as teachers and as people

At this stage clear signs of growing confidence among group members were manifested in the form of a willingness to defend teaching ideas or to demand more from the school principal.

Carol reported that through the growth she experienced from her new experience, she had decided to make some requests to her principal to improve her teaching conditions. She reported that now she could see the problems more clearly and build enough confidence to ask for changes in her school. Carol went on to add that "this group research business really works because from team feedback I started getting questions in my mind which helped me do work that I had absolutely forgotten about. Since meeting with other art teachers, I have felt more confident to spend more time concentrating on just figure drawing, for instance. I came to realize that in the public schools of Cyprus, the teachers do work in a more traditional way, teaching the figure, still life, etc. So may be I will try concentrating on a few things instead of trying to do too much all at once" (April, 94).

Furthermore, at a joint meeting, Tasia reported an incident with the art inspector which took place during this period. Tasia's class was using a preliminary draft form of the working paper on the face/mask lesson when the inspector visited her art class. Each student had in his/her possession the paper with the objectives of the lesson and the paper on visual aids to clarify the lesson and supply input in order to help them start their work. The inspector immediately expressed her dissatisfaction with this method because it did not comply with the established theories of art teaching; which is, giving students too much guidance might stifle their creativity. Tasia said that she defended her actions to her inspector with confidence. She felt that what she was doing was valid. "I defended my actions to the inspector because it was something that we had discussed extensively and I knew that it had good possibilities for solving problems in students' lack of interest in learning. How can they create anything if they can't understand what they are doing? The inspector had never tested her theories. Her negative comments were not based on any practical evidence as we have. Not giving students enough, only inhibits their understanding and limits their interest because otherwise art concepts are too abstract for them to grasp".

After receiving positive reinforcement from group members, other participants also felt confident in bringing into their teaching items which they had previously taught and had now forgotten. Their newly-acquired confidence led them naturally into the activities of stage B where the solution formulated is tested through action research procedures and joint reflection.

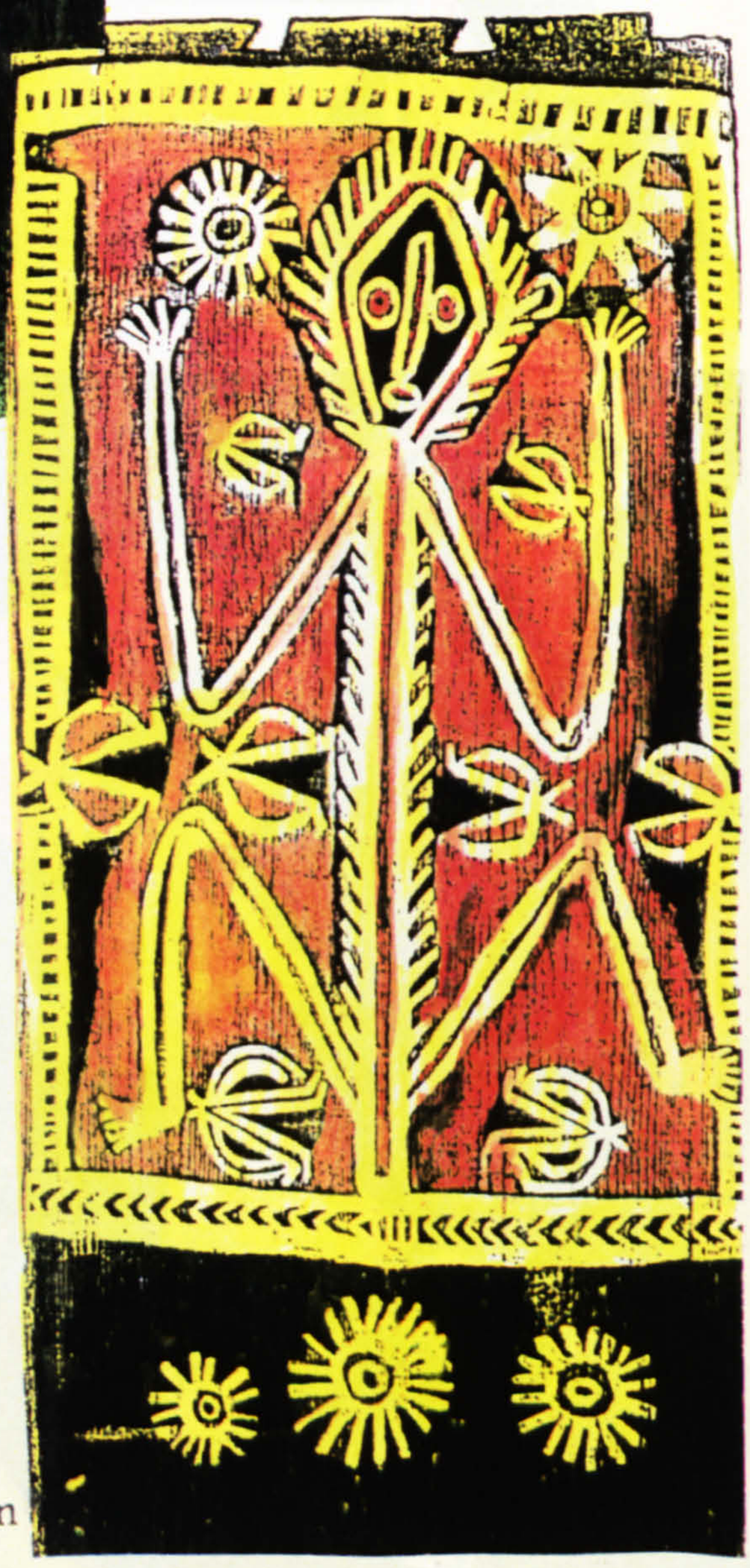
1

2

3

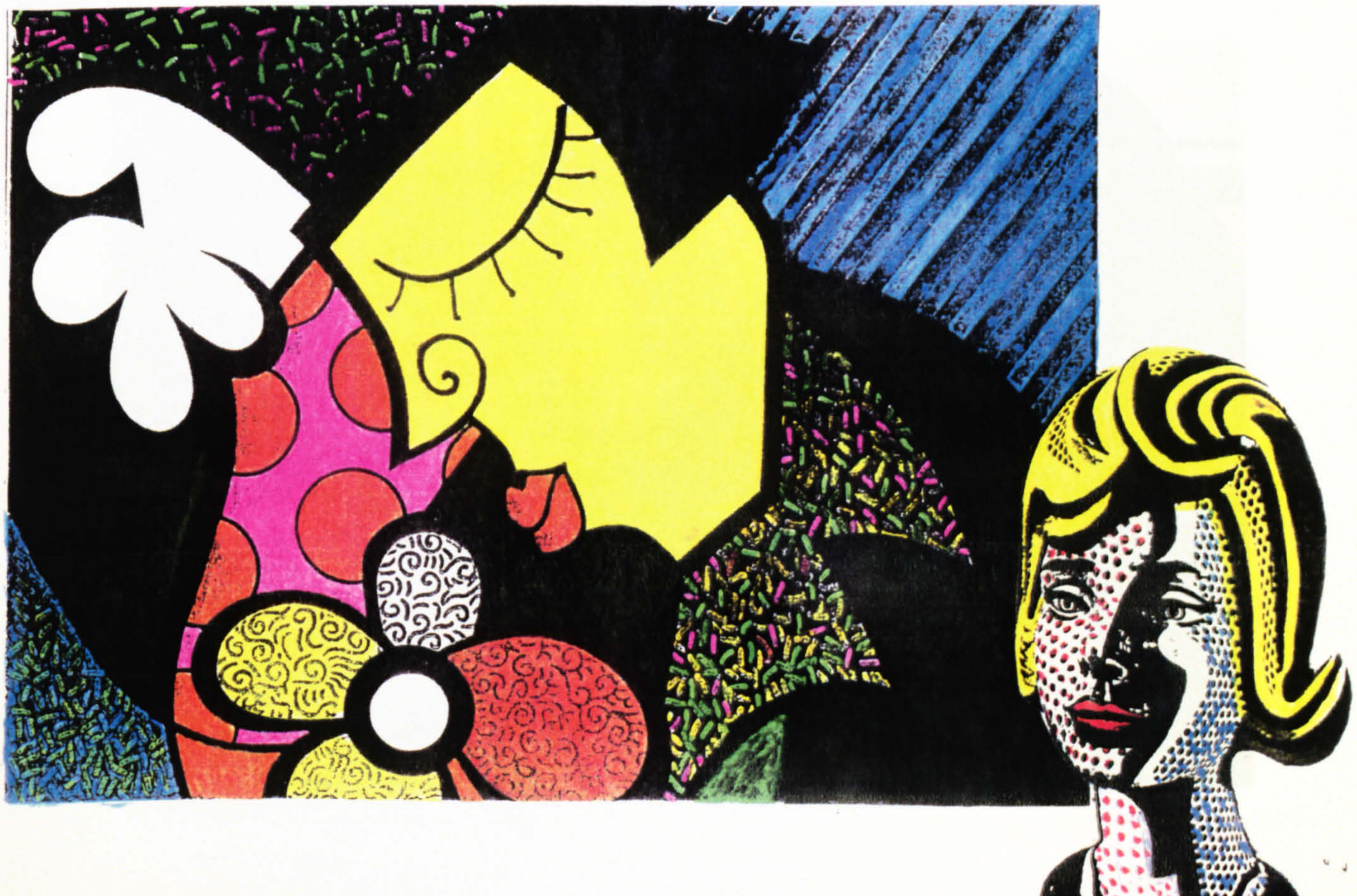
Color Plate 3.1

Carol's work on face and related works



Color Plate
3.2

Visual aids on face/mask lesson



Color Plate 3.3

Visual aids on face/mask lesson

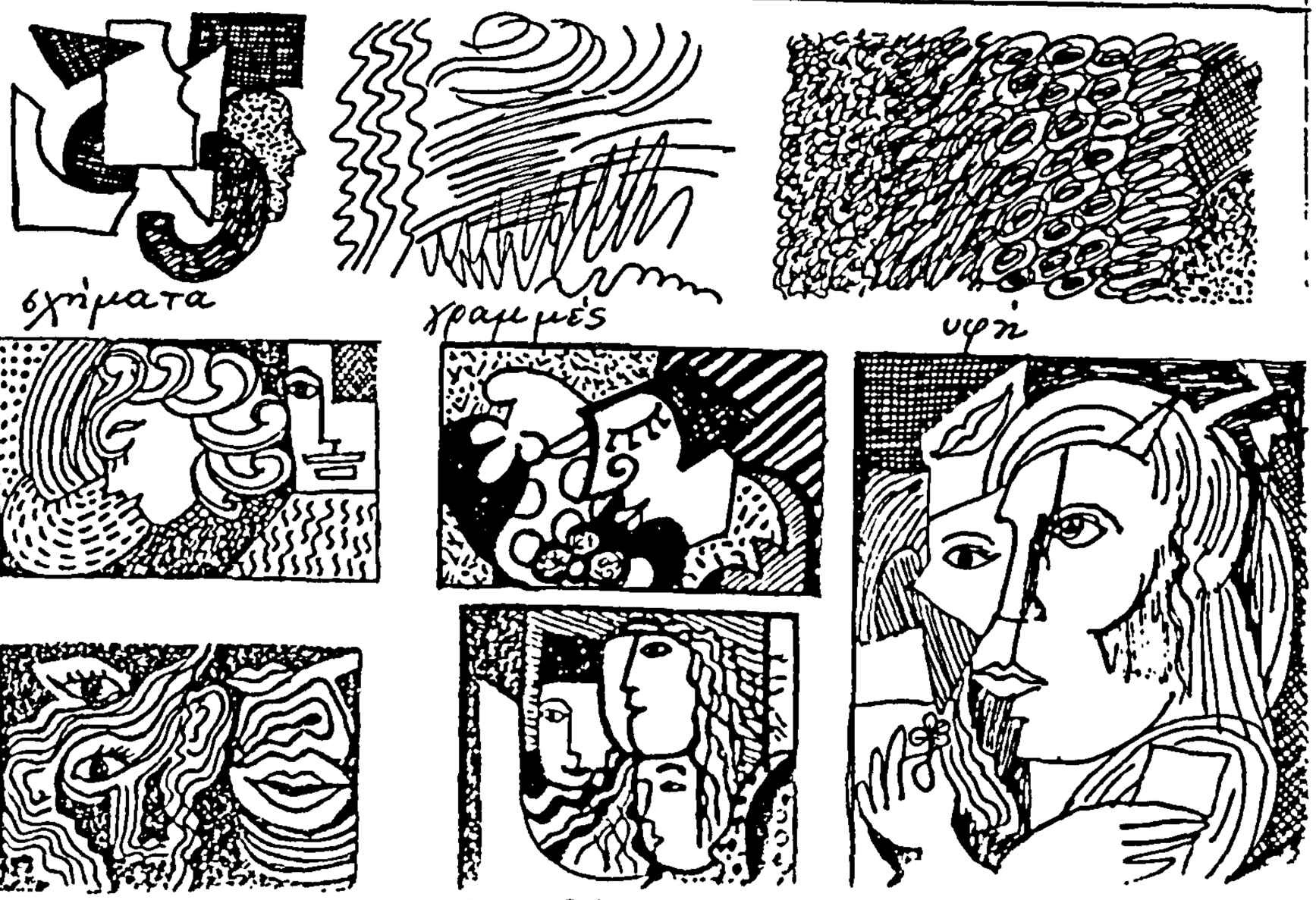
Color Plate 3.4

Team discussing Carol's work

ΤΙΤΛΟΣ	Το πρόσωπο μέσα από τη Τέχνη
ΣΤΟΧΟΣ:	Η μάθηση της καλλιτεχνικής γνώσης μέσα από το πρόσωπο όπως μεταφράζεται από διάφορους καλλιτέχνες από την αφρικάνικη μάσκα ως τη σύγχρονη μετάφραση του προσώπου και η δυνατότητα της ευρείας αντίληψης της έκφρασης του προσώπου στη Τέχνη.
ΠΡΟΒΛΗΜΑ	Η δημιουργική χρήση των καλλιτεχνικών στοιχείων του σχήματος, γραμμής, υφής, χρώμα σε μια επιμέρους εργασία με πρόσωπα.
ΚΑΛΛΙΤΕΧΝΙΚΟΣ ΠΡΟΒΛΗΜΑΤΙΣΜΟΣ	Ο προβληματισμός είναι στην κατασκευή των προσώπων χρησιμοποιώντας τα στοιχεία του σχήματος, γραμμής, υφής και το δείγμα αυτών των προσώπων μεταξύ τους και με το χώρο ιδίως. Προσέχω τα πιο κάτω παραδείγματα δυνατότητα και βλέπω πώς η κάθε εργασία διαφέρει τα πρόσωπα και το χώρο από αυτά.
ΥΛΙΚΑ:	Μικτά υλικά: μπογιά, παστέλ, έγχρωμα χαρτιά με διακοσμήσεις και πρόσωπα, μολύβια, μαρκαδόροι.
ΠΑΡΑΔΕΙΓΜΑΤΑ:	Στα παραδείγματα δίδονται έργα από την αφρικάνικη μάσκα ως τα σύγχρονα έργα που παραδίδουν έντονη παραμόρφωση προσώπου μέσα από το σχήμα, υφή, γραμμή.

ΕΜΦΑΣΗ: ΣΤΟΙΧΕΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΘΕΣΗ

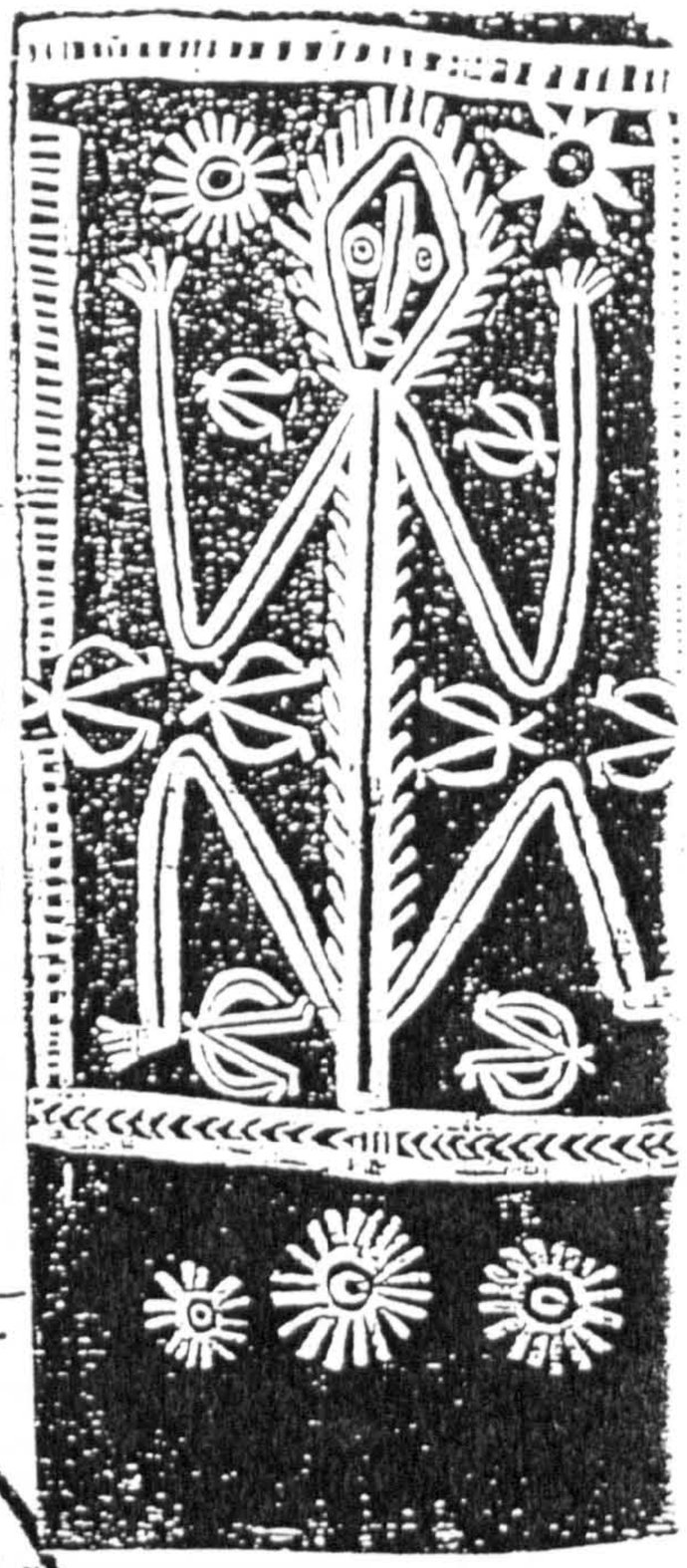
ΠΡΟΣΕΧΩ ΠΩΣ ΔΕΝΟΝΤΑΙ ΤΑ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ ΜΕΤΑΞΥ ΤΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΩΣ ΣΧΕΤΙΖΕΤΑΙ ΤΟ ΦΟΝΤΟ ΜΕ ΑΥΤΑ. ΔΕΝ ΣΠΑΖΩ ΤΟ ΧΩΡΟ ΣΕ ΠΟΛΥ ΜΙΚΡΑ ΚΟΜΜΑΤΑΚΙΑ. ΑΦΗΝΩ ΚΑΙ ΚΕΝΟΥΣ ΧΩΡΟΥΣ.



Data 3.1 Working paper on objectives

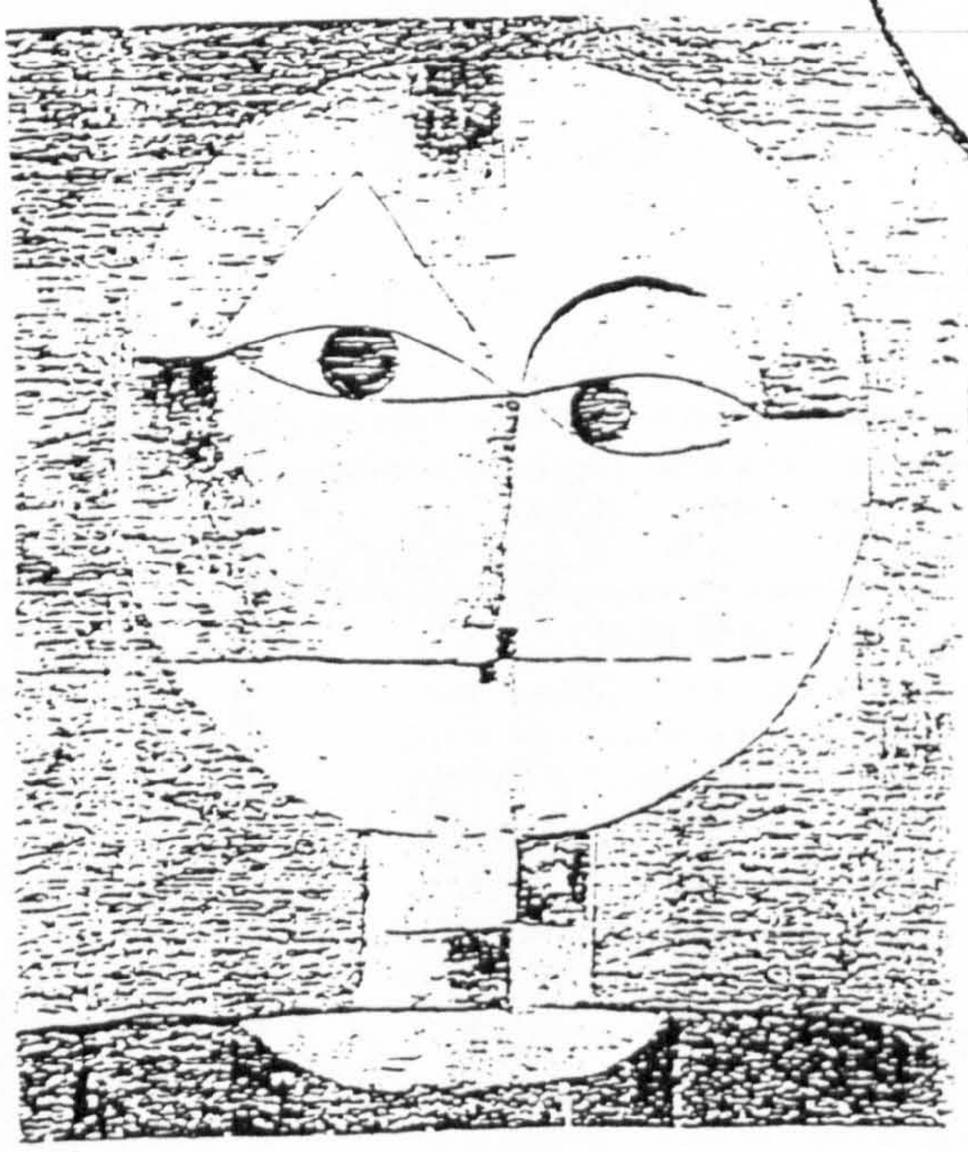
Α.

Β.



Γ.

Δ.



Ε.

Συγκρίνω τα έργα Α, Β, Γ με τα Δ, Ε, Ζ. Τα τρία πρώτα είναι αρχαίες αιγυπτιακές μάσκες και τα Δ, Ε, Ζ είναι σύγχρονα έργα του 20ου αιώνα. Βρίσκω κάποιες ομοιότητες μεταξύ των αρχαίων έργων με τα σύγχρονα έργα; Ποια στοιχεία τέχνης χρησιμοποιούνται;

Ζ.

Data 3.2 Working paper on visual aids

ΚΡΙΤΗΡΙΑ ΑΞΙΟΛΟΓΗΣΗΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΟ ΜΑΘΗΤΗ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΕΡΓΟ ΥΠΟ ΤΗ ΜΟΡΦΗ ΕΡΩΤΗΣΕΩΝ:

I. Πόσο επιτυχημένη είναι η εργασία μου σύμφωνα με τα κριτήρια που δόθηκαν από τη καθηγήτρια;

— Πόσο έντονη είναι η αίσθηση της γραμμής, υφής, σχήματος στην εργασία μου; Χρησιμοποίησα όλα αυτά τα στοιχεία;

— Πόσο ενδιαφέρον είναι η σύνθεση που δημιούργησα, δηλαδή έντυσα ωραία το πρόσωπο με τον υπόλοιπο χώρο πάνω στο χαρτί; Πως κατασκεύασα τον υπόλοιπο χώρο ώστε να ταιριάζει με τα πρόσωπα;

— Συνδύασα πολλά υλικά. Μου αρέσει το αποτέλεσμα της εργασίας μου; Αν όχι γιατί;

— Δούλεψα μέσα στα χρονικά πλαίσια που δόθηκαν από τη καθηγήτρια ή σπατάλησα το χρόνο μου μιλώντας; Ερχόμουν προετοιμασμένος στο μάθημα της Τέχνης ή δεν έβρισκα ενδιαφέρον;

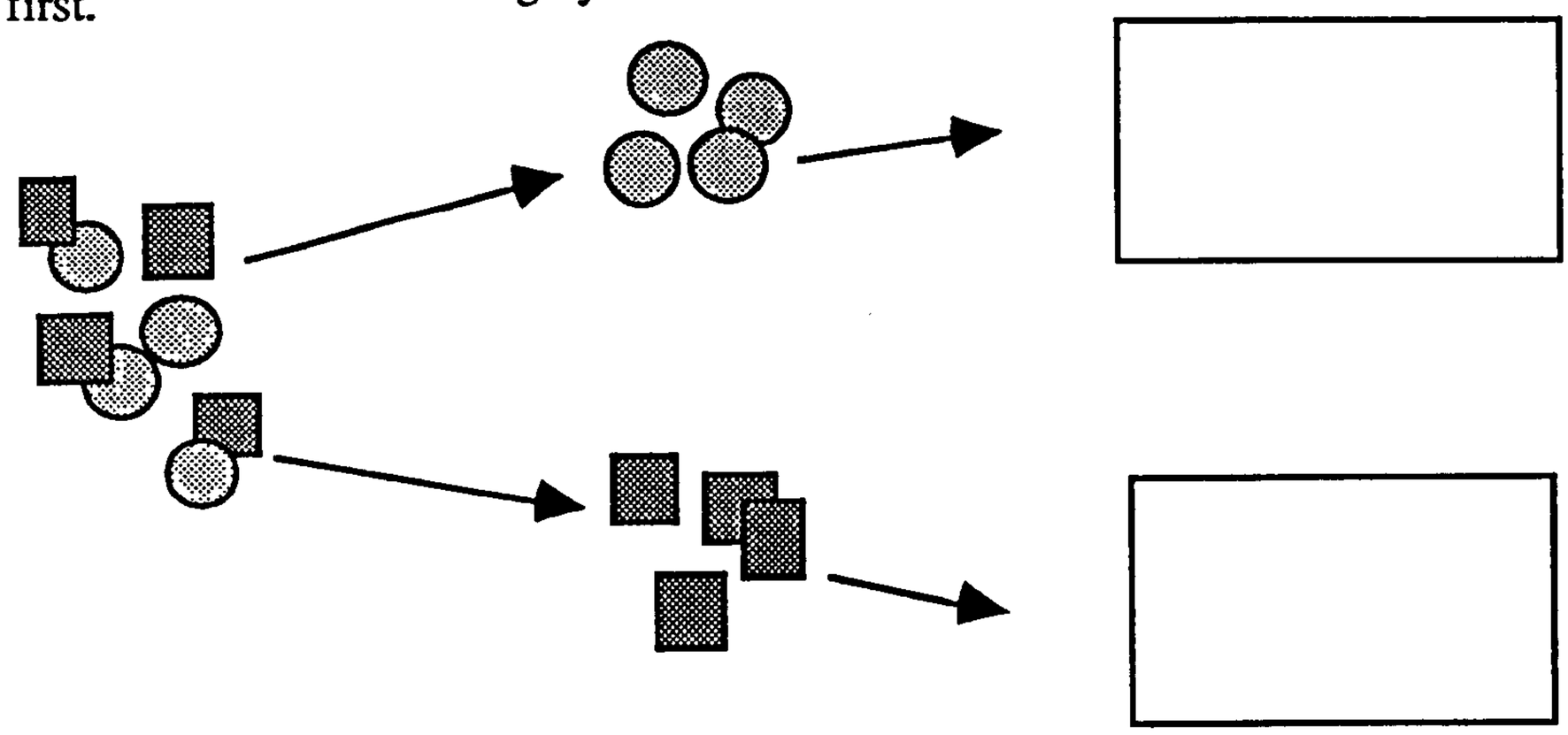
II. Τι έμαθα για τα στοιχεία της Τέχνης και το πρόσωπο μέσα από τη Τέχνη;

— Τι έμαθα απ' αυτή την εργασία;

— Πώς μπορεί να παρουσιαστεί ένα πρόσωπο στην Τέχνη;

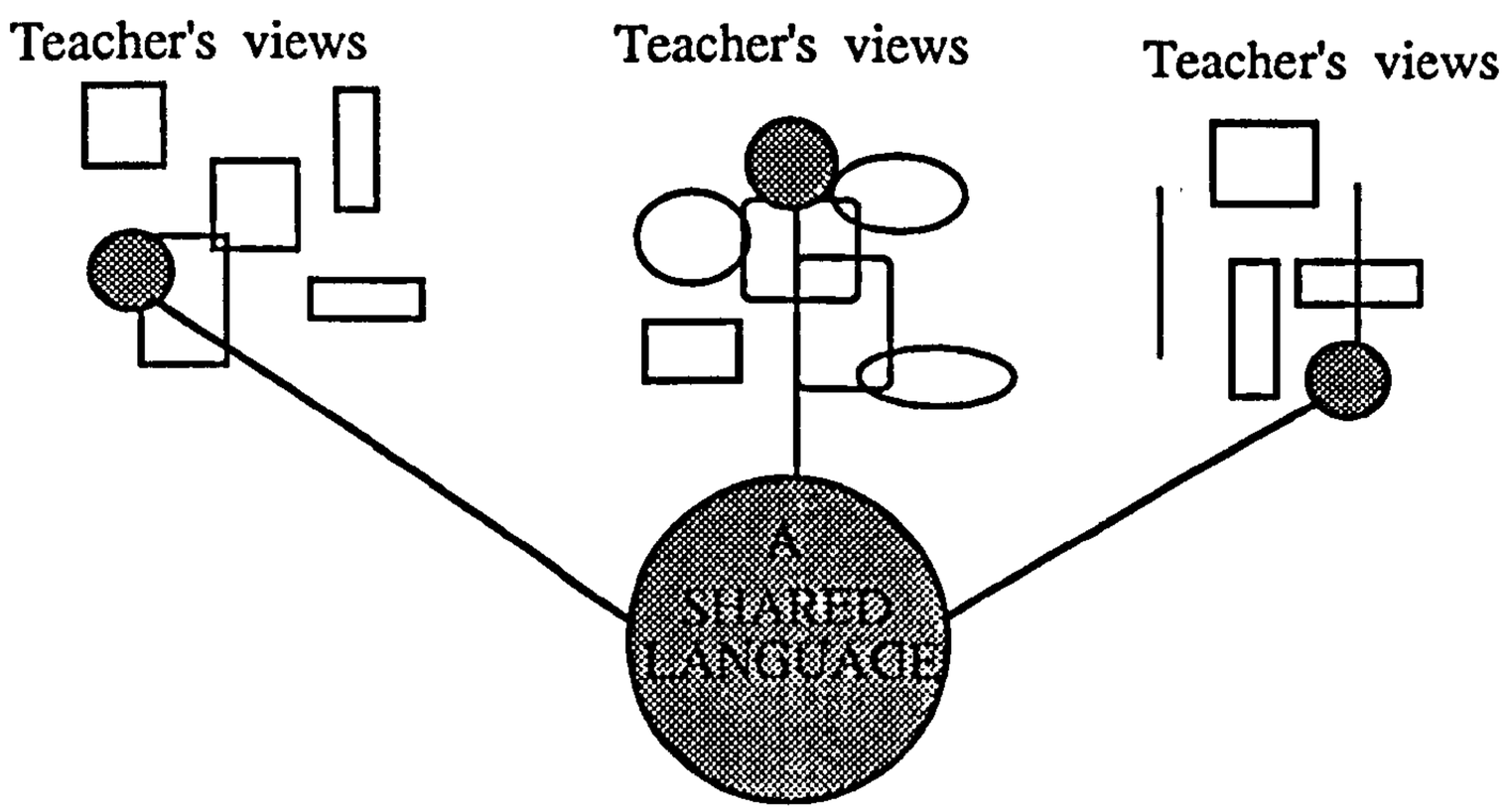
— Πώς παρουσίασα εγώ το πρόσωπο στο έργο μου;

Data 3.3 Student self-evaluation questionnaire



The problem - development process helped the teachers to simplify problems by grouping them into larger categories and treating large categories consisting of interelated problems instead of many small isolated problems.

Figure 3.1 The Problem-development process



In teachers' views certain elements can be found that are similar. These common elements can be the basis for a shared language among teacher: in the same profession.

Figure 3.2 A Shared language

Stage B: Feedback from Action Research

Introduction

This stage lasted from May, 94 until July, 94. During this period, the most important classroom research activities took place. The team members implemented the project which they had planned during stage A. This was the most active, fulfilling and exciting period experienced by the members of the group. The teachers were testing a possible solution to a real teaching problem in their classrooms, and a variety of data were collected. Becoming involved in a practical aspect of classroom research using ideas they themselves had developed served as a great incentive to sustain their interest and commitment to change.

This proved to be a turning point for the teachers. First, they experienced the potential of collaborative work in improving teaching practice. Second, they experienced their first real excitement when feedback indicated that the strategy they had planned to test through classroom research procedures, was capable of addressing the problems they had identified. At this stage, group involvement, commitment and interest reached its highest peak.

Data were collected in the form of student self-evaluation questionnaires, casual interviews with students, teachers' fieldnotes, observation of classroom activity, many examples of student art work and photographs of classroom activity and joint sessions. The teachers reported the data they had collected to the entire group. They presented their students' art work, the self-evaluation questionnaires relating to their work and their own observations of classroom activity. Each member had the opportunity to present her own perceptions about the experience of doing research in her own classroom.

Processes

The stage of implementing the implementation plan in classrooms will be reported on as observing and monitoring classroom activity, and reporting and reflecting on data collected.

Observing and monitoring classroom activity

The process of observing classroom activity became a substantial aspect of classroom research for the team members. Walker and Adelman (1975) say this about observation: "What we are working towards is teachers becoming their own researchers and evaluators...; we *do* see it as an important, integral element of *both* learning and teaching" (p. 8). This was the intended outcome of classroom observations. The team followed Hopkin's (1985) suggestions by asking the questions of what student behavior is worth observing? And what is the focus of the observation?

Clearly, the purpose of the observation was to see how effective the working paper was as a method of stimulating student interest in the art lesson. Appropriate questions to be considered while observing were: are students interested in the working paper? are they reading it? are they creating images faster by holding on to the paper with the visual images? did they develop more easily an understanding of the artistic concepts in question by having the lesson written down in a form which they could hold on to?

After specifying the purpose of the observation and what sort of student activity teachers needed to focus on, the next step was to select suitable data-collecting techniques in order to monitor the activity in a systematic way and follow its development. The group decided that these techniques could be considered: fieldnotes, casual student interviews, observation tables and taking photographs. Initially, an attempt was made to develop a structured observation table to record such matters as students' use of the working paper, but in the event group members found it more practical to produce brief fieldnotes of key events. A few examples follow. These fieldnotes which follow were written by the teachers immediately after the lesson.

Class: age 15 - 16, high school students
Time: 45 minutes
Lesson: Face/Mask lesson

First lesson
This is a small class of twenty-four students...quiet group and manageable...very few disciplinary problems.

I gave out the working papers to students with a piece of white paper to work on. It felt a bit awkward trying out this new procedure. I was a bit apprehensive. Will it work? In theory it sounded like a good procedure to try out on students, but putting a new procedure into practice creates doubts and fears in me. I remind myself that this is an experiment, testing a new idea not implementing it as a final formula.

I asked students to sit down, be quiet and read the paper. This was the first time that they had been given an outline of the lesson written down. They were a bit confused at the beginning. They did not understand this new procedure. There was some disturbance. I explained that the art lesson is written down for them in simple language with helpful information relating to the work they are asked to do. This would hopefully help them remember and understand more effectively the ideas they are asked to implement in their work.

Finally, students sat down and read the paper. When students started working, there was a noticeably quicker response to the artistic idea and they were able to create visual images of their own without much delay.

When the students asked questions about points that needed clarification, I would refer to the working paper. I talked very little in the art room. I asked students to read the lesson carefully, look at the visual examples and ask questions later if they had any. The students themselves originated a discussion based on questions they had about the art lesson.

Second lesson

I have noticed that one boy was reading the working paper to help him remember what he is working on.

Another boy next to him picked it up to read afterwards.

Two girls in the back are reading it, trying to decide on how to start their painting.

I am finding that the working paper has triggered the students' interest. They concentrate more.

Me: Does the working paper help you?

Student: Yes, it does. It gives us ideas and we can hold on to it and look at it and study it on our own time when we are out of the art room.

Student: Yes, it helps. It gives you ideas and the instructions as well...so you know your criteria.

One of the students showed me her work and commented: "This idea I got from the working paper and worked my own faces around it. The idea on the working paper gave me a starting point".

While leaving the art room, a girl remarked to her friend: "I'm actually enthusiastic about my work".

I have noticed that some students tried to copy the examples on the working paper. I must keep this in mind and next time tell students at the beginning of the lesson not to copy the examples. They are to be used for understanding and inspiration. Many students, while working, used them as part of their painting and added their own interpretations. It gave them something to start with.

I told my students directly at the beginning of the lesson that the new approach of using working papers in art class was designed to help them remember, understand, get visual inspirations and not ask questions all the

time about what they were supposed to be doing. I also informed the students that this was an experimental approach and I needed their views on it. I took photographs of students while they were working. This made them feel important because someone felt that they were doing something worth capturing on film.

Fifth lesson

Students are finishing up their work. They brought the working paper with them to class. They used examples from the paper to help them get started on their idea.

I kept referring to the paper when questions came up.

Some students took the work home to finish for final grading. This class is doing nice work. I took photographs of students while working. (Niki, May, 94)

Class: age 15 - 16, high school students
Time: 45 minutes
Lesson: Face/Mask lesson

Second lesson

The students were given the working paper on the face/mask lesson. This report is taken from the second lesson with the working paper. This is a big group of students, noisy with disciplinary problems and difficult to handle.

Student: What are we suppose to be doing in the art class today?

Me: I gave you a working paper last time.

Student: Oh, yeah. I'll go get it. I left it in my homeroom.

Student: Oh, give me one too Ms., I forgot to bring mine in today.

Student: I didn't get one. I was absent last time. Can I have one too please?

Student: I need one for my partner as well.

Student: It's kind of nice having a working paper to refer to and the visual images on it are good too. We get ideas. (Sophia, P., May, 94).

The photographs depicting student activity during this stage can be found in Color Plates: 3.5 and 3.6. Students are exhibiting activity in reading and using the working paper, drawing their ideas by using the visual aids as a source of inspiration and using paints in creating rich textural surfaces in their work.

Reporting and reflecting on data collected

It is worth noting that the participants were anxious to report on the data they had collected through the study of their unique classroom situations. It seemed that this excitement was due to the new and revealing discoveries made. They discussed over the phone, and at small meetings of two and three their classroom research as it was progressing, even before the joint meeting.

As already stated, the team members collected a variety of data: student self-evaluation questionnaires, student work, teacher fieldnotes from observations of classroom activity, and casual interviews with students as well as photographs of student activity. Students from secondary and elementary education as well as the American Academy were involved. The team members selected the data-collecting techniques with which they felt most comfortable in their own context.

Ways data were reflected upon: Reporting on their data allowed the teachers space to reflect on the relationship between the various types of data collected. This meant that a) students work was reported on in reference to the corresponding student self-evaluation questionnaires which aimed at assessing the extent to which the students' answers reflected the quality of the final product that they had created. b) The teacher did not simply comment on the success of a student's work; the question now was whether the work was successful in reference to the criteria defined on the working paper that the student was given to work from. c) Moreover, it was examined to see to what extent each piece of work reflected the visual aids presented in the worksheets in order to enhance understanding of artistic concepts. d) Teacher activity was examined in relation to student activity: how was the role of the teacher affected due to this new method of working? did students still ask the teacher many questions? how was the teacher's role affected now that the student had a working paper? what should the teacher be doing in this new context?

Finally, collaboration was another factor which affected data-reflection. Reflecting upon data through collective effort, widened the possibilities for a deeper examination. Thus, the participants had an opportunity to reflect upon student work from a variety of perspectives. These included the teacher's perception of how the students did, and the students' perception of their own work, combined with the comments of team members as independent observers to balance the other two perceptions.

What were the outcomes of this reflection - what discoveries were made: Discoveries were made in reference to the above four relationships in data-reflection. a)Reading the students' responses directly from their self-evaluation questionnaires, helped to evaluate the extent to which students understood

the art lesson and identified gaps in their understandings of certain ambiguous concepts. It was also possible to detect what type of artistic vocabulary students were using to describe their work; what words and phrases (from the artistic vocabulary relating to that particular lesson) the students picked up and used to express themselves. The team also felt that the student self-evaluation questionnaires offered useful information in answering questions relating to how much of that lesson students could learn and actually did learn. The teachers presented a number of student works and read from the corresponding self-evaluation questionnaire each student's own perception of how well he/she did, and what he/she learned from this particular work. Revealing how students perceived their own work, allowed the teachers to understand better what the students did and how.

The team members commented that the students' self-evaluation questionnaires made the work important in the eyes of the student. Carol put it this way: "They are little tests for the students on how they did in their art work. Student self-evaluation questionnaires are a good idea. They actually give students self-esteem. Their opinions are valued and that makes them feel that art is important as a school subject. I told my students that their self-evaluations would be taken under consideration in their grading. I believe students should have a say in their evaluation. It makes them look more closely at what they are doing. Student self-evaluation questionnaires should be a permanent teaching tool" (June, 94).

Original samples of students' self-evaluation questionnaires on the face/mask lesson can be found in Data: 3.4 (from a state high school), 3.5 (from the American Academy) and 3.6 (from elementary school). The questionnaire given to elementary students by Sophia H. in order to evaluate their work on the face/mask was more simplified with fun illustrations drawn on it which many children colored-in.

Feedback was collected from three hundred student self-evaluation questionnaires from elementary and secondary schools. Feedback on these offered information on how to deal with a number of issues:

- effective questioning on the student self-evaluation questionnaire;
- affecting the way student looks at his/her artwork;
- student understanding and learning of artistic concepts;
- insight on student thinking.

b) The group thought that the majority of the students' work was effective because they exhibited clearly the criteria asked for in the working paper. The teachers commented that the final student product was not based on by-chance-teaching because shapes, lines, textures and colors were in fact evident in the students' final works exhibiting an awareness of the need to unify

the artistic elements within the background. It was noted that the students exhibited an awareness of what they were asked to work with.

Despite some modifications needed, the working paper was considered to be quite useful by both teachers and students alike because it had had a positive affect on students' working habits. It made the students concentrate more because the working paper was used as a basis for discussion and reference. Having a piece of paper to hold on to and refer to the objectives of the lesson and helpful visual aids affected in a positive way students' attitude towards their artwork.

c) Students seemed to work quicker in creating visual images and understood the ideas a lot faster. The paper with the visual images worked as a valuable stimulus giving students something to start with. Students commented as well that it offered them security, ideas and the opportunity to examine it at their leisure time. They were not bound by the restrictions of class-time.

d) The teachers' fieldnotes provided useful information about the way that student activity and student interest developed through the lessons. Furthermore, they showed how teachers could make better use of class time through a more effective organization of learning materials.

Outcomes

In this section I shall attempt to identify the outcomes of this stage. I shall propose five distinct components which are related to issues concerning criteria, linkages, new directions for curriculum development, self-awareness within pedagogical practice and a willingness to develop new approaches to teaching.

Developing criteria

Here I shall refer to criteria in terms of both teacher effectiveness and student self-evaluation. During the reporting and reflecting process, group discussion centered around the discoveries of new ways of doing things in the art room in the form of comparisons between new and old methods of teaching. Criteria development resulted mainly through the exercise of comparing student products and teaching strategies through newly-gained understandings of issues resulting from alternatives now being tested giving a new structure to their every-day situation.

In Color Plate: 3.7 the group can be seen engaged in a discussion of comparing old student work using the face as a topic and new work on the same topic. "Compared to the way I used to teach the abstracted face before, I feel that this is more effective. The final results of student work are more artistic. Supplying students with work papers, seems to have made a difference.

Now that I see something better to compare with, I can see that what I thought was great work, wasn't after all" (Tasia, joint meeting, June, 94).

The group slowly developed a set of criteria against which to evaluate their teaching effectiveness. I want to argue that an authentic set of criteria was formulated by the team to evaluate their teaching because the criteria were not imposed from without but emerged after a period of reflection on their own experience of testing and monitoring a new method of teaching.

The development of new criteria was in large part the product of reflection on student feedback, especially student self-evaluation. Despite a recognition that some of the early questions in the evaluation forms needed rephrasing to match the student's understanding or to allow more space for open-ended answers, the group found that their efforts in this direction gave them a much greater insight into their students' understanding, into the way in which they learned most effectively, and into the way in which they thought and expressed themselves on artistic topics. This greatly assisted the group in the development of more sophisticated criteria against which to judge student work.

This clearly challenges the current approach in Cyprus where a uniform set of criteria is provided to apply to all types of work regardless of the problems the students are tackling. These criteria (as defined by the inspector), are derived from a highly sophisticated aesthetic appropriate to professional art. This renders them inadequate for student artwork.

The team members agreed that it was due to the concrete idea represented by the working paper that students' works turned out to be more effective from an artistic point of view. They were beginning to sense the importance of formulating a set of criteria for assessing students' work. Furthermore, making students aware of those criteria and helping them to understand in visual terms what they were supposed to be working with were also helpful strategies.

For samples of actual students' works on the face/mask lesson see Color Plates: 3.8 - 3.13. In Color Plate: 3.14 the team is engaged in discussion of the works.

Students also began to develop an understanding of the criteria provided by their teachers. Beyond that, in the process of thinking about their own efforts, they were beginning to appreciate what is good art and to evaluate their own work against their own criteria.

The team sought to investigate and to examine students' own interpretations, understanding and learning from a particular lesson, rather than simply the final product. The product in itself was not important, but rather the product in reference to how students thought they did. By examining

students' perceptions via their self-evaluations and comparing them to their work, it became apparent that it would be possible to help students realize the full potential of their work.

"The task of a subject teacher, one might reasonably claim, is to help pupils understand and operate the criteria by which work of quality is judged within a discipline or field: for instance, the criteria by which an artist might judge a portrait miniature, an athlete might judge an attempt at a high jump,...Children's interpretations of such criteria are usually implicit in their work products (essays, paintings, etc.)....

Several questions follow:

- In what ways can criteria for judging the quality of work be effectively communicated to pupils?.....
- In what ways can pupils be helped to deepen their understanding of the criteria?
- In what ways can pupils be helped to critique their own and each other's work in light of a shared understanding of appropriate criteria?
- In what ways can the teacher monitor the mutuality of understanding the process of assessment within a working group?" (Rudduck, 1991, pp. 84-85).

Rudduck's questions above, bear similarities to what the team members were questioning in regard to student work.

Students' self-evaluations revealed how much and how well they understood the lesson. In fact, it was noted that some work were more artistically creative than it appeared in the creator's responses while other student responses were better than their final work. Overall, students can be helped to clarify their answers and to say exactly what they mean by articulating better the use of the artistic elements in their work. Examples of these can be found in Data: 3.7 - 3.11 where students' self-evaluation questionnaires are presented together with the work concerned (Color Plates: 3.15 - 3.19).

In Data: 3.7 - 3.11 students expressed themselves in various ways regarding their evaluation of their own work. Some managed to look at their work critically and succeeded in expressing clearly in words what they expressed in artistic terms. They used appropriate adjectives to describe their work in order to show how the artistic elements made sense in their interpretation of the face/mask. Even though some students did not realize the full potential of their work and still others used more expressive language in describing their work than it was evident in the final product, the majority of student responses revealed a sense for developing criteria about what is quality artwork.

The team felt that all the student work collected through this project revealed a strong variety of artistic expression. It became apparent that students did not simply copy the visual aids presented to them as examples,

but instead used them as a starting point and inspiration as well as a way of understanding the objectives of the work.

Furthermore, team members commented that the lack of criteria in their previous practice had resulted in their rejecting good teaching ideas or merely repeating what felt more convenient for themselves. Thus the lack of any type of criteria aggravated the continuation of the static routine in their teaching; thus preventing them from making choices about good teaching ideas as well as moving towards improvement.

The team felt that criteria development took place because the creation of a new teaching approach helped to re-evaluate their existing teaching procedures through the impact of comparisons. This allowed them to examine critically their teaching experience and not merely to experience teaching. The teachers agreed that this critical examination deepened their understandings of evaluative procedures regarding their teaching role, student learning and student work. Table 3.1 below, seeks to summarize this concept.

Table: 3.1 Creating validity criteria

Focus	Past situation	New situation	Criteria development
Teacher's role	The teacher is not involved	Teacher's role is examined	Teacher gets to know his/her workplace
Student's role	Student is not involved	Student is involved in his/her own learning. Student's understanding is examined.	Student feedback is used to solve class problems and improve his/her learning.
Student work evaluation	Art work not compared to criteria	Criteria developed for student work	Teacher and student share common criteria for work evaluation

Creating links

Based on the experience they acquired from the processes, team members' perceptions of relationships became steadily clearer. This meant that while the team members discussed outcomes of classroom research they came to the view that the lack of student interest in learning, their own teaching performance and curriculum improvement were all interrelated.

Examining possible factors behind students' lack of interest, led to new teaching strategies which stressed student independence, organization of learning experiences, enhancement of understanding and students' involvement in their own evaluation. Reflection on data collected appeared to suggest that the new student learning strategy tested by the team, offered solutions to the various problems.

Art, as a school subject, seemed to take on importance for the students because their opinions were valued through the self-evaluation questionnaires. Moreover, a link was detected between students' involvement in their evaluation and their interest in doing the work. It was believed as well, that student-evaluation questionnaires might show to parents that learning does take place in the art class.

New directions for curriculum development

The team members increasingly managed to clarify and articulate what they sensed was wrong with the art curriculum and moreover suggest ways of building-in the gaps.

The directions discovered were based on the understanding of the process of student learning by examining the process through the testing and monitoring of a new teaching strategy. "Improving practice involves jointly considering the quality of both outcomes and processes. Neither consideration in isolation is sufficient" (Elliott, 1991, p. 50). The outcomes from the reflective process directed the concern of the team members to possible ways of dealing with the curriculum, thus allowing them to move away from a theoretical aspect of curriculum discussion and into its practical application.

The team's decision that feedback from the self-evaluation questionnaires and student artwork could lead to form a basis for designing a new art curriculum, echoes Elliott's comments on the relationship of the student and the curriculum. "For example, if the teaching process is to influence the development of students' intellectual powers in relation to curriculum content, then it must manifest such qualities as 'openness to their questions, ideas, and ways of thinking', 'commitment to free and open discussion', 'respect for evidence', 'a concern to foster independent thinking' and 'an interest in the subject matter'. Teaching mediates students' access to the curriculum and the quality of this mediating process is not insignificant for the quality of learning" (Elliott, 1991, pp. 49-50).

Self-awareness within pedagogical practice

The new experiences of observing, monitoring and reflecting, clearly presented the teachers with new perceptions on classroom activity. This led to the development of an awareness about certain aspects of this activity never before considered, thus manifesting a clearer picture of the teachers' workplace. The

new experiences involved moving through a sequence of questioning, focusing, searching, finding answers. Initially, the questioning period on student activity in relation to 'what my purpose is in observing student activity,' seemed to help teachers organize their classroom activity before the actual observation. After questioning it became clearer to the participants which student activity to focus on according to the solution tested. Clearly, the teachers were seeking to observe classroom activity in reference to the following:

- Do students refer to the working paper when they are working?
- Do they depend on the teacher a lot; do they still ask questions or has the paper given them more independence?
- Have they started working faster on their artwork due to the visual images given to them on paper so they could see an artistic interpretation of what they were asked to do?
- Are students quieter than at other times and are they trying to concentrate on what they are doing?

Newly-developed perceptions related to aspects of student activity, classroom set-up and the organization of learning materials for a particular lesson. For example, members of the group commented that the way they introduced their lesson was important in attracting students' attention. Moreover, the organization of the space in the art room became more important. They learned to focus-in on specifics depending on what they tested. Having to collect data made teachers look more carefully at what was going on in their classrooms.

Student activity took on additional meaning because answers to problems were sought by teachers through that activity. Before the experience, team members were taking student activity for granted but now they were watching more intently and thus widening their awareness of

- how student work develops;
- how student interest develops;
- how student activity develops in the course of the lesson;
- which time is most important during the lesson;
- which time students work better;
- which time is best for teacher to intrude on student activity.

Overall, the teachers became more aware of their own activity in relation to the students' interest. As Niki commented: "I've noticed that my introduction was more forceful in one class and this affected students' quicker response to the new idea. I took time at the beginning to explain why I'm giving them working papers to work from". Carol commented that: "I noticed that the students were discussing the working paper among themselves. I'm thinking about putting them in discussion groups so they can discuss the work and help each other". Tasia said: "By looking through some photographs of students' activi-

ties in the art room, maybe I could make better use of classroom space. I could put my visual aids in a more central position that can be seen clearly by all".

New approaches to teaching

Based on participants' comments during the reflective period, it seemed that the actual implementation of their project and the experience of seeing how it worked out in practice is what finally convinced the participants to change their old teaching habits. This suggests that teachers need to understand change in practical terms in their own classrooms in order to feel its value and influence in their own teaching.

The real problem, as defined by the group members, was not to discover ways of teaching the artistic elements, but rather to get students interested in learning about those concepts by getting them involved in their own learning and evaluation. It was difficult teaching them a subject that seemed foreign to them.

Previous dealings with innovative teaching methods, proposed at the inspector's seminars or imposed by the ministry officials, had always stopped at the trial stage. The outcomes were simply assessed as positive or negative. Teachers would repeat a new teaching method or simply reject it. No reflection period was ever devoted to analyzing the outcomes and examining further the reasons behind the failure. The innovation would not be improved on and tried again. This way many promising ideas become victims of an inadequate period of reflection and revision. The difference now was that time was permitted to reflect on the outcomes of testing an innovation. After this experience, the group members began to think about other problematic areas in their teaching and sought to find solutions. Thus it appears likely that one of the main objectives for this research as set out in Chapter 1 had been achieved: namely that teachers should develop an awareness of issues together with an ability to initiate action in relation to problematic situations in their profession.

Color Plate 3.5 Student activity in classrooms

Color Plate 3.6 Student activity in classrooms

ΚΡΙΤΗΡΙΑ ΑΞΙΟΛΟΓΗΣΗΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΟ ΜΑΘΗΤΗ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΕΡΓΟ ΥΠΟ ΤΗ ΜΟΡΦΗ ΕΡΩΤΗΣΕΩΝ:

Ανδρέου Αδωνη Α11

I. Πόσο επιτυχημένη είναι η εργασία μου σύμφωνα με τα κριτήρια που δόθηκαν από τη καθηγήτρια;

- Πόσο έντονη είναι η αίσθηση της γραμμής, υφής, σχήματος στην εργασία μου; Χρησιμοποίησα όλα αυτά τα στοιχεία; Χρησιμοποίησα όλα αυτά τα στοιχεία αλλά δεν χρησιμοποίησα το σχήμα και την υφή αλλά και την γραμμή είναι καλά
- Πόσο ενδιαφέρον είναι η σύνθεση που δημιούργησα, δηλαδή έντωσα ωραία το πρόσωπο με τον υπόλοιπο χώρο πάνω στο χαρτί; Πως κατασκεύασα τον υπόλοιπο χώρο ώστε να ταιριάζει με τα πρόσωπα; Η σύνθεση που έφτιαξα είναι αρκετά πρωτότυπη διότι έχει ενδιαφέρον έχει δυνατά που έλκουν το βλέμμα. Δεν θα ήθελα να αλλάξω τίποτα γιατί θα χαλάσει την ισορροπία του υπόλοιπου χώρου έτσι όπως είναι μου αρέσει
- Συνδύασα πολλά υλικά; Μου αρέσει το αποτέλεσμα της εργασίας μου; αν όχι γιατί; Έχω συνδυάσει πολλά υλικά όπως χαρτόνι χαρτί μαδεσκέ χρωματισμένα χαρτιά φύλλα κολάζ μαρκαδόρο. Το εφέ είναι πολύ ωραίο
- Δούλεψα μέσα στα χρονικά πλαίσια που δόθηκαν από τη καθηγήτρια ή σπατάλησα το χρόνο μου μιλώντας; Ερχόμουν προετοιμασμένος στο μάθημα της Τέχνης ή δεν έδειχνα ενδιαφέρον; Κυκλοφόρησα φέτος στη γραμμή πράξη που δόθηκαν και προσπάθησα να ολοκληρώσω την εργασία μου στο σπίτι.

II. Τι έμαθα για τα στοιχεία της Τέχνης και το πρόσωπο μέσα από τη Τέχνη;

- Τι έμαθα απ' αυτή την εργασία; Από αυτήν την εργασία έμαθα πώς να διαφοροποιώ ένα πρόσωπο.
- Πώς μπορεί να παρουσιαστεί ένα πρόσωπο στην Τέχνη; Μπορεί να παρουσιαστεί με διάφορες αντιθέσεις, γραμμές, με χρώματα
- Πώς παρουσίασα εγώ το πρόσωπο στο έργο μου; Εγώ το πρόσωπο το παρουσίασα με συνδυασμό στην επιφάνεια λουλουδιών στα χρώματα και πορτοκαλιών

Data 3.4 Self-evaluation questionnaire on face/mask

Alexandra Diaz

Criteria for evaluating my work.

1. How succesful is my work according to the criteria my teacher gave me?

_ How strong is the line, texture and shape in my work. Have I used all these elements in my picture? I think I did quiet a good job as my teacher told me, Yes, I used many lines and shapes and some textures, and it became a very good picture

_ How interesting is the composition that I have created. Have I managed to join the face with the rest of the picture? How have I constructed the picture so as to work with the face as a whole? I think my picture is nice with my texture I put. I managed to join the face with the rest of the picture.

_ I have used various materials. I like the work that I have created. If not, why? I used only pastels, colours and paints to my picture. I liked the work that I have created because it is a very unusual one. I used many colours to bring out the faces.

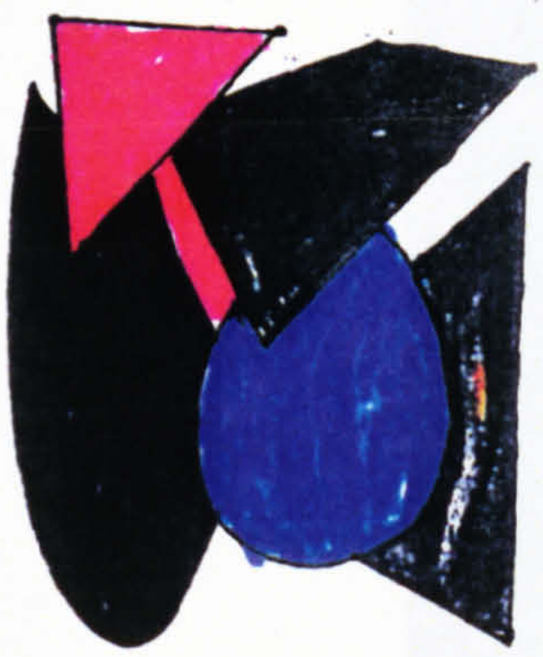
_ I worked during the allocated time given to me by my teacher; or did I waste my time talking? Did I go to the lesson prepared or did I not show any interest? I worked most of the time in the class. I only talked to my neighboor to ask her about my picture. I always go to the lesson prepared with my pencils, rubbers, rules, colours etc.

2. What have I learnt about the face in connection with picture making:

_ What have I learnt whilst doing this exercise? I have learned how to use different colours and materials.

_ How have I shown the face in art? I showed my picture with bright colors and with different shapes and textures.

Data 3.5 Self-evaluation questionnaire on face/mask



σχήματα

ΠΕΤΥΧΑ

ΔΕΝ ΠΕΤΥΧΑ

- Χρησιμοποίησα σχήματα, γραμμές και υφή στο σχέδιο μου; Σχημάτα και γραμμές ναι υφη οχι
- Είναι ενδιαφέρουσα η σύνθεση που δημιούργησα; Ναι είναι
- Πώς κατασκεύασα τον υπόβοιπο χώρο ώστε να ταιριάζει με το πρόσωπο ή τα πρόσωπα; Χρώματα
- Συνδύασα πολλά υλικά; Όχι δεν συνδιασα
- Σπαταλούσα το χρόνο μου μιλώντας; Όχι δεν λον αδιαφορα.

- Μου αρέσει το αποτέλεσμα της εργασίας μου.
- Γιατί δεν μου αρέσει το αποτέλεσμα της εργασίας μου; γραμμές
- Ερχόμουν προετοιμασμένος στο μάθημα της Τέχνης ή δεν έδειχνα ενδιαφέρον; Εδειχνα ενδιαφερων
- Τι έμαθα απ' αυτήν την εργασία; Να χρωματιζω

Όνομα: Αντωνης

- Τι έκανα εγώ στην εργασία μου; Εινανα διαφορα θρωσουδα και τα χαιμαλοα

Ημερ. Μάιος

Data 3.6 Self-evaluation questionnaire on face/mask

Color Plate 3.7 Team comparing old and new student work

Color Plate 3.8 Student work on face/mask lesson

Color Plate 3.9 Student work on face/mask lesson

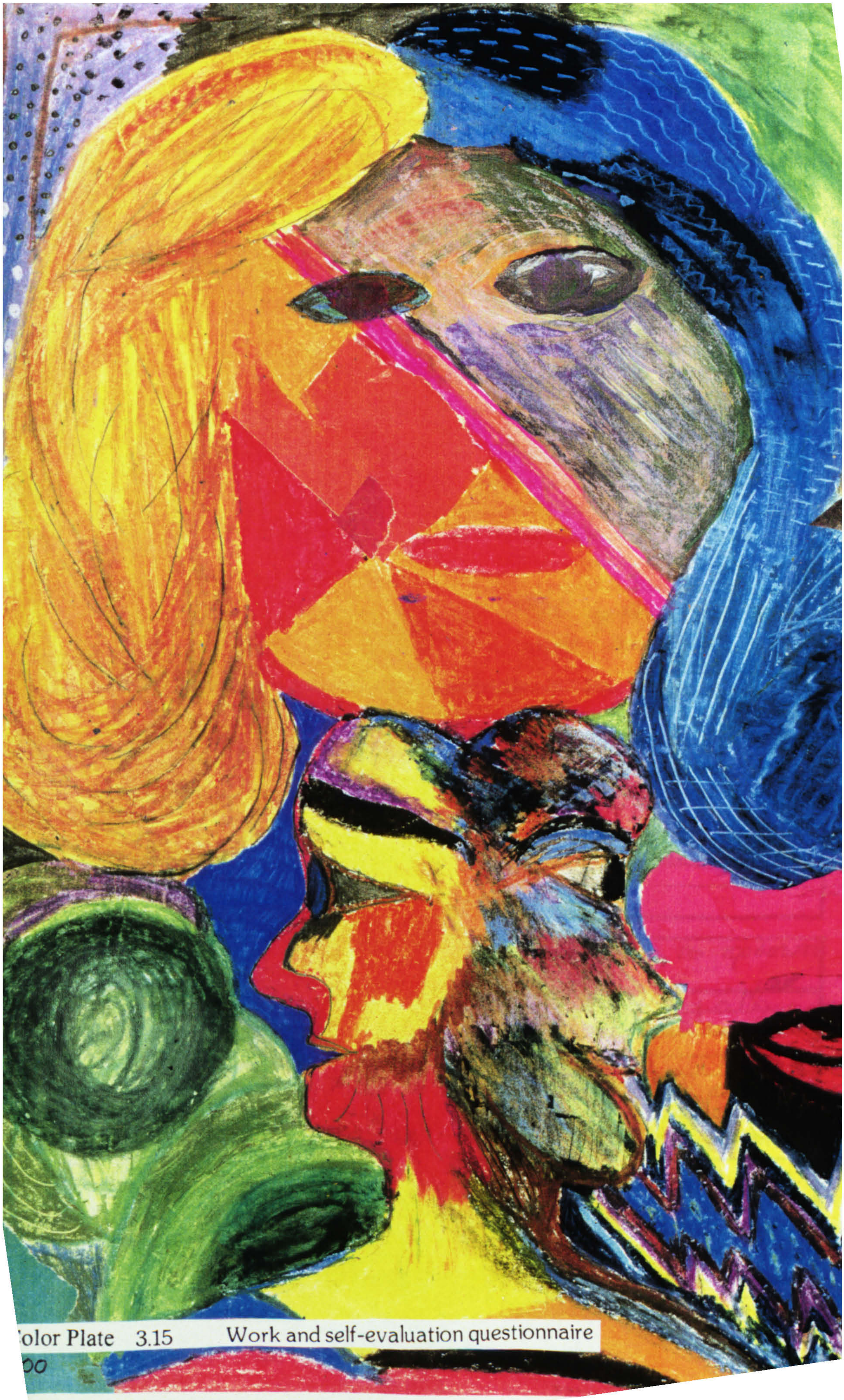
Color Plate 3.10 Student work on face/mask lesson

Color Plate 3.11 Student work on face/mask lesson

Color Plate 3.12 Student work on face/mask lesson

Color Plate 3.13 Student work on face/mask lesson

Color Plate 3.14 Team discussing student work on face/mask



olor Plate 3.15 Work and self-evaluation questionnaire

00

Μαρία Σαραγκούνη Α33

ΚΡΙΤΗΡΙΑ ΑΞΙΟΛΟΓΗΣΗΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΟ ΜΑΘΗΤΗ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΕΡΓΟ ΥΠΟ ΤΗ ΜΟΡΦΗ ΕΡΩΤΗΣΕΩΝ:

I. Πόσο επιτυχημένη είναι η εργασία μου σύμφωνα με τα κριτήρια που δόθηκαν από τη καθηγήτρια;

- Πόσο έντονη είναι η αίσθηση της γραμμής, υφής, σχήματος στην εργασία μου; Χρησιμοποίησα όλα αυτά τα στοιχεία; Ναι, θα χρησιμοποιούσα όλα τα στοιχεία. Για θραύση από τη φρουτοσαλάτα μάλλον έντονη και μάλλον έμφαση. Χρησιμοποίησα μικρές και μεγάλες.

- Πόσο ενδιαφέρον είναι η σύνθεση που δημιούργησα, δηλαδή έκοψα ωραία το πρόσωπο με τον υπόλοιπο χώρο πάνω στο χαρτί; Πως κατασκεύασα τον υπόλοιπο χώρο ώστε να ταιριάζει με τα πρόσωπα; Για συνδυασμό χρησιμοποίησα μικρούς, έγχρωμα φρούτα, μικρά, διάφορα τριγωνικά κομμάτια.

- Συνδύασα πολλά υλικά. Μου αρέσει το αποτέλεσμα της εργασίας μου; αν όχι, γιατί; Ναι, συνδύασα πολλά υλικά. Νομίζω ότι αρέσει το αποτέλεσμα της εργασίας μου.

- Δούλεψα μέσα στα χρονικά πλαίσια που δόθηκαν από τη καθηγήτρια ή σπατάλησα το χρόνο μου μιλώντας; Ερχόμουν προετοιμασμένος στο μάθημα της Τέχνης ή δεν έφερνα ενδιαφέρον; Δούλεψα στα χρονικά πλαίσια που μου δόθηκαν και έδωσα σημασία στο σχέδιό μου.

II. Τι έμαθα για τα στοιχεία της Τέχνης και το πρόσωπο μέσα από την Τέχνη;

- Τι έμαθα απ' αυτή την εργασία; Έμαθα να βάζω το σημείο εστίασης και να συνδυάζω τα άλλα στοιχεία.

- Πώς μπορεί να παρουσιαστεί ένα πρόσωπο στην Τέχνη; Μπορεί να παρουσιαστεί με πολλούς τρόπους όπως με υφή, μπλοκάρισμα, χρώματα και γενικά φαντασία.

- Πώς παρουσίασα εγώ το πρόσωπο στο έργο μου; Το σημείωσα το παρουσίασα όπως με υφή με άλλα στοιχεία σημασία και χρώμα γουαλάκι.

Data 3.7 Student self-evaluation with artwork

Color Plate 3.16 Work and self-evaluation questionnaire

Γαβριηλίδου Σοφία
Α33.

ΚΡΙΤΗΡΙΑ ΑΞΙΟΛΟΓΗΣΗΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΟ ΜΑΘΗΤΗ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΕΡΓΟ ΥΠΟ ΤΗ ΜΟΡΦΗ ΕΡΩΤΗΣΕΩΝ:

I. Πόσο επιτυχημένη είναι η εργασία μου σύμφωνα με τα κριτήρια που δόθηκαν από τη καθηγήτρια;

— Πόσο έντονη είναι η αίσθηση της γραμμής, υφής, σχήματος στην εργασία μου; Χρησιμοποίησα όλα αυτά τα στοιχεία;

Η αίσθηση της γραμμής είναι έντονη στη εργασία μου όσο και τα σχήματα, όμως η αίσθηση της υφής δεν είναι τόσο έντονη λόγω του ότι δεν μου αρέσουν τα πραγματικά όλα τα στοιχεία εκτός την αίσθηση της υφής.

— Πόσο ενδιαφέρον είναι η σύνθεση που δημιούργησα, δηλαδή έντυπωσιακά ωραία το πρόσωπο με τον υπόλοιπο χώρο πάνω στο χαρτί; Πως κατασκεύασα τον υπόλοιπο χώρο ώστε να ταιριάζει με τα πρόσωπα;

Είναι ενδιαφέρουσα η σύνθεση που δημιούργησα δηλαδή έντυπωσιακά ωραία το πρόσωπο με τον υπόλοιπο χώρο, όπως επίσης υπάρχουν χώρο ώστε να ταιριάζει με τα πρόσωπα υπάρχουν διάφορα σχήματα, υφή με τη συνέχεια των γραμμών.

— Συνδύασα πολλά υλικά. Μου αρέσει το αποτέλεσμα της εργασίας μου; αν ναι γιατί;

Δεν συνδύασα πολλά υλικά έτσι μου αρέσει το αποτέλεσμα της εργασίας μου διότι το αποτέλεσμα είναι όπως το είχα φανταστεί.

— Δούλεψα μέσα στα χρονικά πλαίσια που δόθηκαν από τη καθήγήτρια κι όπως το σχεδίασα στο χρόνο μου μειώνας; Ερχόμουν προετοιμασμένος/η στο μάθημα της Τέχνης κι δεν έβγαζα ενδιαφέρον; Και δούλεψα μέσα στα χρονικά πλαίσια που δόθηκαν από τη καθηγήτρια και δεν ολοκλήρωσα το έργο μου διότι δεν ενδιαφέρομαι στο μάθημα της Τέχνης δεν βγάζω ενδιαφέρον στο μάθημα της εργασία μου στο σπίτι για να το τελειώσω.

II. Τι έμαθα για τα στοιχεία της Τέχνης και το πρόσωπο μέσα από τη Τέχνη;

— Τι έμαθα απ' αυτή την εργασία; Νέα απ' αυτή την εργασία έμαθα ότι θα να έχει μια ενότητα ενδιαφέρον πρέπει το πρόσωπο να είναι ωραία ενσωματωμένο με τον υπόλοιπο χώρο και ο υπόλοιπος χώρος να ταιριάζει ωραία με το πρόσωπο.

— Πώς μπορεί να παρουσιαστεί ένα πρόσωπο στην Τέχνη; Ένα πρόσωπο μπορεί να παρουσιαστεί στην τέχνη και ρεαλιστικά βάση είτε και παραδοσιακά είτε και ένα πρόσωπο υπερβολικά, εξπρεσιονιστικά.

— Πώς παρουσίασα εγώ το πρόσωπο στο έργο μου; Το πρόσωπο στο έργο μου το παρουσίασα παραδοσιακά, εξπρεσιονιστικά.

Data 3.8 Student self-evaluation with artwork

Color Plate 3.17 Work and self-evaluation questionnaire

Κινή Ζωή.

ΚΡΙΤΗΡΙΑ ΑΞΙΟΛΟΓΗΣΗΣ ΑΠΟ ΤΟ ΜΑΘΗΤΗ ΓΙΑ ΤΟ ΕΡΓΟ ΥΠΟ ΤΗ ΜΟΡΦΗ ΕΡΩΤΗΣΕΩΝ:

I. Πόσο επιτυχημένη είναι η εργασία μου σύμφωνα με τα κριτήρια που δόθηκαν από τη καθηγήτρια;

— Πόσο έντονη είναι η αίσθηση της γραμμής, υφής, σχήματος στην εργασία μου; Χρησιμοποίησα όλα αυτά τα στοιχεία; Είναι πολύ έντονη η αίσθηση της γραμμής υφή σχήματος διότι χρησιμοποίησα πολλά διαφορετικά μεγέθη γραμμών και σχημάτων. Όλα τα χρησιμοποίησα

— Πόσο ενδιαφέρον είναι η σύνθεση που δημιούργησα, δηλαδή έντεσα ωραία το πρόσωπο με τον υπόλοιπο χώρο πάνω στο χαρτί; Πως κατασκεύασα τον υπόλοιπο χώρο ώστε να ταιριάζει με τα πρόσωπα; Είναι αρκετό ενδιαφέρον τον υπόλοιπο χώρο τον γέμισα με διάφορα σχεδία σημεία από γραμμούτσα με μεγέθη και κυκλούλες διάφορες.

— Συνδυασα πολλά χρώματα. Μου αρέσει το αποτέλεσμα της εργασίας μου; Αν όχι γιατί; Το φόντο του χρησιμοποίησα όλο πολλά χρώματα. Και του άρεσε το αποτέλεσμα

— Δούλεψα μέσα στα χρονικά πλαίσια που δόθηκαν από τη καθηγήτρια ή σπατάλησα το χρόνο μου μιλώντας; Ερχόμουν προετοιμασμένος στο μάθημα της; Τέχνης ή δεν έφερνα ενδιαφέρον; Προσπάθησα ώστε τα τελειώσω το σχέδιο μου στα χρονικά πλαίσια. Άρεσα από τα υλικά τα οποία του

I. Τι έμαθα για τα στοιχεία της Τέχνης και το πρόσωπο μέσα από τη Τέχνη;

— Τι έμαθα απ' αυτή την εργασία; Έμαθα τη σύνθεση προσώπων με τόνους και κατηγορίες φωτός.

— Πώς μπορεί να παρουσιαστεί ένα πρόσωπο στην Τέχνη; Με διαφορους τρόπους. Είτε αφηρημένα είτε όπως φαίνεται στην πραγματικότητα

— Πώς παρουσίασα εγώ το πρόσωπο στο έργο μου; Τα πρόσωπα μου ήταν ζωγραφισμένα όπως κάποιες και υλικούς

Data 3.9 Student self-evaluation with artwork

Color Plate 3.18 Work and self-evaluation questionnaire

Future Reference:

Criteria for evaluating my work.

1. How succesful is my work according to the criteria my teacher gave me? How strong is the line, texture and shape in my work. Have I used all these elements in my picture?

I think my work is very succesful cause thanks to my teacher taught me how to drww carectly and use ideas, inaginey thing. I used all the elemen to

How interesting is the composition that I have created. Have I managed to join the face with the rest of the picture? How have I constructed the picture so as to work with the face as a whole? I think that the composition that you have created is realy interesting. because it's my first year I'm doing and has mix ideas. Yes you have managed to join the face.

I have used various materials. I like the work That I have created. If not, Why? Yes I have used various materials and I like what I have created, not all the pictures cause they didnt turn out that well, but I have tried my best

I worked during the allocated time given to me by my teacher; or did I waste my time talking? Did I go to the lesson prepared or did I not show any interest? I worked during the lesson and dont talked but I was concentrated on the work I was doing and I always go to the lesson prepared. And I shaw interest cause I like Art.

2. What have I learnt about the face in connection with picture making: What have I learnt whilst doing this exercise?

I have learned different ideas how to mix my ideces to make the face. And how to imagine use your mind.

How have I shown the face in art?

I have shown half of the face a man and the other half a woman

Data 3.10 Student self-evaluation with artwork

Color Plate 3.19 Work and self-evaluation questionnaire

C 1.15

Criteria for evaluating my work · Melanie Symeon

1. How succesful is my work according to the criteria my teacher gave me? How strong is the line, texture and shape in my work. Have I used all these elements in my picture?

Yes I have used all the elements in my pictu
there are strong lines, shapes and texture in my work

How interesting is the composition that I have created. Have I managed to join the face with the rest of the picture? How have I constructed the picture so as to work with the face as a whole?

I have managed to join my face with the pictur
but the face does not join in as a whole
shapes and the pieces of my face is scattered around.

I have used various materials. I like the work That I have created. If not, why?

Yes, I have used ~~two~~ pieces of magazine and
pencil crayons and also felt-tips pens. Yes, I like my
work

I worked during the allocated time given to me by my teacher; or did I waste my time talking? Did I go to the lesson prepared or did I not show any interest?

I didn't talk and I worked quite hard on
my work; I also went to the lesson prepared
and I did show interest

2. What have I learnt about the face in connection with picture making: What have I learnt whilst doing this exercise?

That there are very interesting things you
can do with the ---- ordinary facial parts

How have I shown the face in art?

Yes I have

Data 3.11 Student self-evaluation with artwork

Stage C: The Building Stage

Introduction

By this stage, the members of the group had matured in the sense that they were now aware of the valuable gains that could be achieved through classroom research. Thus they were becoming well equipped to build on the experience of doing research in their own setting.

Very crucial meetings took place during this stage which affected to a great degree the future work of the group. This particular period lasted from August, 29, 1994 until October, 1994. Four joint meetings took place and six small and private sessions. At all the meetings significant topics were discussed. The first joint meeting of this period took place just before the new school year, 1994-95 had started. Team members re-evaluated the work they had accomplished during the past year. Based on this re-evaluation, decisions were made for the coming year.

The members felt a lot more comfortable as the team grew in experience. This had a positive affect on the development of their personal commitment to the group work and the improvement of teaching problems. There was a willingness among teachers to telephone each other and schedule meetings at each others' homes. They became very friendly with each other and contacts among team members were more open and more frequent. They decided to continue meeting as a group and to contact each other in order to discuss teaching problems; not to regress back to isolation. They did not think any more about whether it was worth their time to attend a group meeting. On the contrary, they initiated group meetings and telephone contacts to discuss new problems.

Processes

During this stage the team re-evaluated the work accomplished, applied what they learned to new-found problems and offered suggestions for disseminating their findings.

Re-evaluating the work accomplished

Right after the Summer vacation had ended, the members suggested a joint meeting in order to re-evaluate the work accomplished the year before and to pick up where they left off. They also wanted to re-evaluate their own growth as professionals. "What did we get out of this experience and where is it leading us to?" (Tasia, August, 94).

The first joint meeting, took place in August, 29, 1994 just before the new school year commenced. The teachers contacted each other during the sum-

mer vacation and set up the joint meeting in order to organize their tasks for the coming year. They discussed the work they had accomplished in classrooms through action research and which of the outcomes were worth building on for the coming year. They did not wish to simply repeat the work, but rather to build on it.

They endorsed the collaborative aspect of their experience and the new teaching procedures they had used to confront students' lack of interest. Carol expressed her feelings about her fellow co-workers. "I like to mix with other art teachers because I was isolated for too long and I hated that. I like talking over problems in my art class with other art teachers. I feel more optimistic about my job now. Before this, I was feeling really depressed" (Joint meeting, August, 94).

The team agreed that the concrete idea that the working papers had offered to the students, had proved an essential part of their efforts. "I believe that the working paper idea with a self-evaluation questionnaire is the best solution we have yet found to deal with the problems of creating interest and giving independence to students and a sense of learning. I will not do the European Art Contest this year in all my classes. I will try this new approach systematically and persistently as a new teaching tool. Having seen how the new procedure works in practice we understand it better. Now I feel ready to use the working paper and the student self-evaluation questionnaire with more confidence in this coming year. But I think we still need to find a different way of approaching students in the first grade of junior high school. They have absolutely no experience in art.....they found it difficult to understand some of the artistic vocabulary discussed in the working papers. Maybe what is needed is some type of a preparatory course in art for this age group to help them understand better some of the basic artistic concepts" (Tasia, joint meeting, August, 94). However another teacher said: "I find that this working paper works for all ages. It worked for my students" (Carol, joint meeting, August, 94). "My kids in elementary school liked the strange and imaginative ideas I gave them on the working paper" (Sophia H., joint meeting, August, 94). "We needed to know what students are learning through the lessons we teach. This we got through the student self-evaluation questionnaires" (Tasoulla, joint meeting, August, 94).

Since it was realized that the feeling of security created through the working papers seemed to raise students' interest in doing the work, the team decided that working papers should be designed for more topics. This would continue to emphasize an understanding of artistic elements and principles. The topics suggested were taken from the ones that the team thought students could relate to: the texture and shapes of birds, fish and animals, the human figure as a shape on a decorative background, and the circular bond between mother and child. Students would be asked to investigate an artistic problem through each theme.

It was agreed to design a set of lessons based on the themes offered using the working paper procedure with a student self-evaluation questionnaire designed at the end of each lesson. These sets of lessons would be tried out for one year. The first working paper would include the objectives, the problem, points of emphasis and media to be used in order to inform and clarify the lesson. The second would offer possible solutions to the problem in visual terms. The third paper was the student self-evaluation questionnaire which allowed the students to reflect on their work and to offer critical judgments. Color Plate: 3.20 shows students working on the new themes. Color Plates: 3.21 (human figure) and 3.22 (birds, fish, animals) show finished works by students.

A further point of interest was the team's recognition of students' favorable response to more contemporary works of art. These works are more abstracted, naive, simplified and decorative. "The inspector often emphasizes drawing from life and she pays a lot of attention to realism. I found that my students enjoyed the more imaginative works we used. They freed themselves from realism which is always difficult to do. Now they used any colors they wanted in very nice creative work" (Tasoulla, September, 94). "I agree. My students enjoyed immensely the decorative line work in contrast to colored shapes in the visual aids we gave them" (Sophia H., September, 94). Becoming aware of students' positive response towards this type of work, the members sought to follow this through and searched for more contemporary works for the new lessons. Samples of these can be found in Color Plates: 3.23 - 3.25.

Applying what teachers learned to new-found problems

The team felt that a new phase of their work should begin at this stage. With the coming of the new year, teachers found themselves faced with new teaching settings and therefore with new classroom problems. It is interesting to follow through the teachers' way of dealing with the new problems after their experience of group work. The team interpreted the new discoveries as teaching tools for improving future problems and not as formulas of effective teaching. "Values are infinitely open to reinterpretation through reflective practice; they cannot be defined in terms of fixed and unchanging benchmarks against which to measure improvements in practice" (Elliott, 1991, p. 50).

Two main problems were highlighted during these discussions: The first of these was revised by Carol who described a new problem she encountered in her advanced painting class, an elective course for students in their final years. She was faced with a new group of students who had elected this course. Her students were setting up their own rules for the course, thus making it difficult for her to control the class. She called up another group member to ask for suggestions and support. "I have a problem with

my advanced painting elective course. My students need more, demand more in this course. I've got a few books on the subject but they have too many ideas. They look extremely complicated" (Carol, September, 94). At this stage, contacts were easily initiated by teachers. As soon as a teacher encountered a problem, she sought support from the other group members.

During a joint session, Carol raised the following questions for group reflection on her problem. "How could I offer more to an advanced group of students who elect art and expect more out of the course? How do I organize my teaching, so I can offer more to my students? What should my priorities be in an elective advanced painting course for high school students?" (Carol, joint meeting, September, 94).

Sophia P., Carol and Niki (joint meeting, September, 94) decided to get together and suggest solutions which would be presented to the other group members for discussion. All three teachers encountered similar problems with elective art courses with older students in senior high school. Based on procedures used the previous year for solving problems, the teachers decided to give students a syllabus with the objectives and priorities of the course as proposed by the teacher. This syllabus was to be given to students to clarify for them the boundaries of the course. Students could offer suggestions and opinions relating to the course's objectives. It was argued by team members that Carol did not present any criteria for the course at the beginning of the year thus allowing the students to assume that they could create their own. This resulted in confusion for both the teacher and the students. The three people addressing the problem agreed to focus on two main concerns; the artistic problem itself, and the problem of raising student interest in the course.

After a discussion of past experiences with painting courses and after studying a number of books on art education, they decided to base their new course on three main objectives: developing student awareness of balanced composition in painting, of the relationship between positive and negative space in composition, and of problems of color contrast in painting. Appropriate visual aids on color and composition in painting were developed.

Carol reported on the initial stages of the implementation of this strategy at the joint meeting in September. She brought unfinished student work to present to the group in order to receive feedback from them. Carol commented, interestingly enough, that she could not keep to the original plan of her course. The students' work was not what she expected. She had allowed student initiative to affect her original planning. She felt that some of their original interpretations of the lesson seemed to offer a better direction.

The second main problem tackled by the group was the problem raised by the European Art Competition. Entry to this is a tradition for Cypriot public schools. The competition originated from the European Community Council and it takes place annually. It is a painting competition for elementary, junior and high schools for the countries of the European community.

This competition creates tremendous problems for art teachers because it is an imposed activity (teachers have absolutely no choice in the matter). It takes a great amount of time away from their creative teaching due to the highly sophisticated themes set which are quite difficult even for the teachers themselves to comprehend.

The general theme for the European contest in the year 1994 reads as follows: "Developing an identity in a United Europe". For the junior high school students themes were stated as follows: "Investigate and depict in your artwork examples of traditional architecture found in your own country. Also combine buildings of European architecture which were built in your country centuries ago and have become an inseparable part of the Cypriot culture. Give emphasis to the originality of the composition of your painting and the use of artistic media".

The topics were difficult to understand as concepts and even more difficult to interpret in visual terms as artistic expressions. Due to their intellectual character the themes could not possibly inspire visual images through an artistic interpretation. The teachers brought the problem to the group for discussion. After two joint meetings they were able to come up with possible solutions to tackle the problems.

They related the problem to lessons they had designed using the working paper approach. Moreover, they searched for appropriate visual aids to stimulate a creative, visual response to the problem. They agreed that it was better to investigate the problem through visual means rather than trying to analyze the meaning of the words in the theme itself. In Color Plate: 3.26 the team can be seen in search of visual aids. Color Plate: 3.27 shows samples of the final visual aids chosen by the team to be used in the European theme. These samples exhibit aesthetic and creative qualities through the combination of many visual images in one composition. During their joint meeting the teachers formed possible alternatives to the artistic and visual problem posed by the theoretically difficult theme set. "I feel a lot better now. The pressure I was feeling has been lifted" (Tasoulla, joint meeting, October, 94).

Dissemination

A significant issue brought up by the teachers at the joint session in October, was the need to disseminate their work. This was the climax of their group effort. They realized that if their innovative ideas were to make any

impact on the system, they needed to be communicated to other colleagues. Their comments indicated intense feelings of accomplishment. Various suggestions were made. "We must promote this idea of a concrete working paper for students and design examples for other art teachers who are not members of our team, to see and get them interested by convincing them....need to convince them; make examples of the right type of questions to show them how we did it. We'll promote this idea of the concrete and push it farther. It will take....I think two or three years to take root, but it will work in the long-run. So, we need to make examples of the concrete papers and the accompanying questionnaire. Art teachers do not know nor have the time to do these questions for student self-evaluation" (Tasia, joint meeting, October, 94).

At a yet another joint meeting in October, 94, Tasoulla suggested that the group's findings should be reported by the members to the Pedagogical Institute through the Ministry of Education in the form of a brief report. "The report would be introduced as the suggestions of six art teachers on new pedagogical procedures they had tested" (Tasoulla, October, 94). "Other art teachers should be helped to go through the experience from the beginning in order for them to feel that this is theirs as well" (Sophia H., joint meeting, October, 94). The team members did agree with the notion that the only effective way to convince other colleagues that this was a worthwhile experience is to encourage them to experience the process from the beginning and to feel in control of their own situation.

All the team members agreed to Tasia's idea of disseminating the group's findings by setting out the entire collaborative experience in a book titled Learning from the Experience of six Art Teachers. "Let's make a book using our views. We'll write about the new teaching procedures we tested and about the fact that as a group we had more confidence than we ever had as individuals. We'll emphasize that the book represents the experiences of six teachers of secondary and elementary education and not merely theoretical views on general education" (Tasia, joint meeting, October, 94). "Yes, this sounds like a great idea. Let's keep together as a group and write the book based on our recent experiences. This will help other teachers as well to learn from our practical experience which will show an idea implemented and not just ideas presented in theoretical terms. We'll also show six different points of view on each idea discussed; how each teacher sees it and present our outcomes towards the end of the book. Let's include photographs of our group meetings as well as our students working in their art rooms with the art teacher" (Tasoulla, joint meeting, October, 94). "I will present the ways my young students responded to the lessons we tested so teachers teaching art in elementary schools will benefit as well" (Sophia H. joint meeting, October, 94).

Another more practical possibility discussed was the presentation of their ideas in a small booklet or even a pamphlet. In January, 95, the team got

together to decide jointly what would be a convincing way of getting their ideas across to other art teachers; what form should their recommendations take; and what possible obstacles would make it difficult for their discoveries to reach other colleagues. These obstacles would be difficult to overcome. Despite the difficulties, however, the group was willing to advertise its findings. They were even willing to serve as the nucleus which would promote this innovation by offering support to other colleagues. "It would be a good idea to form gradually a network of small groups of teachers working on various problems" (Tasoulla, January, 95).

Finally, the team members offered concrete suggestions on the character and structure of the pamphlet (Color Plate: 3.28). Since it was difficult to approach other teachers with new ideas it was agreed to offer their views in the form of an invitation to new collaborators. "This experience should be presented as a type of educational research first of all. It would not be an ordinary report of research in education, but rather an incitement for similar work by others in the future. Essentially we won't offer ready or guaranteed formulas, but rather help others change situations towards improvement. We will not say that what we are suggesting is the perfect answer to all our problems, but rather the process we followed is the important thing. This is certainly a pioneer procedure we followed. Observing classroom activity, defining problems and from the inside of the classroom work towards the outside. The important thing is to think critically in order to solve problems" (Sophia H., joint meeting, January, 95).

The members thought it best to approach other art teachers they knew or worked at the same school in order to introduce the ideas in the pamphlet. Furthermore, teachers of other disciplines; such as home-economics, design and technology and music had shown an interest in the short student-questionnaires to evaluate the effectiveness of their lessons as well as in the student self-evaluations, after they were shown examples by Tasia, Tasoula and Sophia H..

Outcomes

The processes of re-evaluating the work accomplished, applying what they learned to new found problems and expressing ideas on dissemination seemed to indicate that the team members had developed four significant traits; developing maturity in decision-making, critical reflection on practice, independence to plan ahead and awareness of what is worth researching in classroom teaching.

Developing maturity in decision-making

Before this experience, the team participants had never been offered the opportunity to play the role of the decision-maker in crucial matters such as curriculum development. Allowing them to acquire this role, contributed deci-

sively to their continued interest as well as to their development as decision-makers on classroom matters. They embarked on a continuous process of decision-making regarding a variety of issues. "No other teacher training experience ever allowed for so much teacher initiative to intervene and to use it as a basis for changing and improving situations. I feel so much stronger now as a professional. What was missing before was being allowed by the system, especially the inspector, to say what I think about the issues" (Tasia, January, 95).

Looking back into the processes the team became involved in, it can be inferred that the team's decisions had a basis to fall back on. For example, after their common recognition of a problem they sought for rational solutions. Their maturity as decision-makers became evident because now they readily admitted to problems. "Yes, there is a problem with the themes of the European contest in that they cannot be interpreted into visual artistic terms". The team worked intensely and diligently and with determination. They started from a feeling of serious concern and worked through to a feeling of relief: "Yes, this strategy seems to offer a better solution to the predicament".

The control as well as the frequent exercise of decision-making which led to constructive outcomes contributed to the maturing ability of the group in dealing with classroom problems. The process of applying newly discovered teaching tools to newly found problems, revealed abilities to deal with classroom discrepancies. Their approach to new problems suggested that they had actually developed their ability to handle problems in a more mature way than they had managed previously. Table: 3.2 seeks to illustrate the difference in treatment of problems before and after the experience.

Table: 3.2 Treating problems before and after

Treating problems before the experience	Treating problems after the experience
Resort to blaming everything except themselves for problems	See the problem - formulate questions about the problem
Ignore problems	Seek support to solve the problem
Panic	Keep cool, not panic.
Not see the problems	Become aware of the problems.
Decisions are made in isolation and in theoretical terms not with other colleagues and in practical terms.	Experiment on solutions and reflect on the outcomes in collaboration.
Become confused - not learn anything.	Learn from the experience and build on it.
Not solve anything.	Clarify the situation - has a chance of solving problems.
Not move forward.	Able to move forward.

Development in critical reflection on practice

The processes of re-evaluating the work accomplished and applying what the team learned to new problems, seemed to show the development of an ability to engage in critical reflection. Having experienced the testing of a new procedure in practical terms, teachers became more sensitive to their teaching practice in relation to how it affected their students. This sensitivity was manifested through both questioning and reaching beyond the surface of student products.

They learned to look beyond students' work to their working habits, interest and involvement in art. Questions such as those that follow became a central part of their thinking.

What are my criteria as an art teacher for evaluating student work? Were students themselves aware of the criteria, or did they work by guessing what the teacher was asking for? What did my students actually learn from this particular lesson? How do I evaluate what they have learned?

Oral discussions in class tend to leave many students, who do not like to participate, out of the evaluation procedure. Therefore, a student self-evaluation questionnaire designed for each art lesson, might be a good idea. On student working habits, teachers learned to ask questions such as, how many students actually worked and showed interest in this particular lesson; how much did students work on their own; did I, as their teacher, do most of their work for them?

The team members suggested that since they learned to ask questions relating to what was happening around them in their art room, their critical perception on class activity had matured. This maturity helped them to improve their practice. Things will never be the same for them. "Improving practice, when viewed as the realization of the values which define its ends into concrete forms of action, necessarily involves a continuing process of reflection on the part of practitioners" (Elliott, 1991, p. 50).

For the group members, reflecting critically on their practice meant being able to raise and answer questions beyond what appeared to be a "good art lesson". A good art lesson used to be good only in theoretical terms and based only on the teacher's judgment. Now the team could reflect on an art lesson implemented in practical terms. They could also consider the students' points of view based on work criteria known to both teacher and students. This seemed like a better partnership between the two principal actors of the classroom. The answers gained made it possible for the teachers to move forward. Being critical meant seeking ways of solving similar problems and finding ways of getting the most out of each lesson. It meant going beyond the surface in order to discover the implications. These factors could be used as criteria to improve the effectiveness of les-

sons. Becoming aware of more factors enriched and secured critical capacity. It widened awareness leading to a better chance of exercising critical thinking.

Gaining an independence to plan ahead

At the joint meeting in October, 94, teachers' comments revealed a willingness to continue as a group on a permanent basis and to attempt to assist other art teachers through dissemination. In fact, dissemination revealed clearly the team's willingness to plan for the future. At the joint meeting in October, the final strong commitments to group effort were revealed. "Good for us for keeping the dialogue going. It's good that we kept together for two years. I'm proud of us. This should be a permanent situation" (Carol). The team agreed to bring recent student work on new themes to discuss at the group sessions because it is not possible to team-teach or visit each others' schools. This is not allowed by the system. Each teacher must remain within the boundaries of the school where she teaches.

At this stage, teachers exhibited an independence to plan ahead. Independence meant breaking away from the obstacles of imposed and established theories fostered by outsiders and creating experiences in order to learn from, build on the outcomes and move to an improved way of handling problems and achieving changes in teaching practice. Independence meant moving away from the sameness in teaching and planning new tasks for the future beyond the group project.

Awareness of what is worth researching in classroom teaching

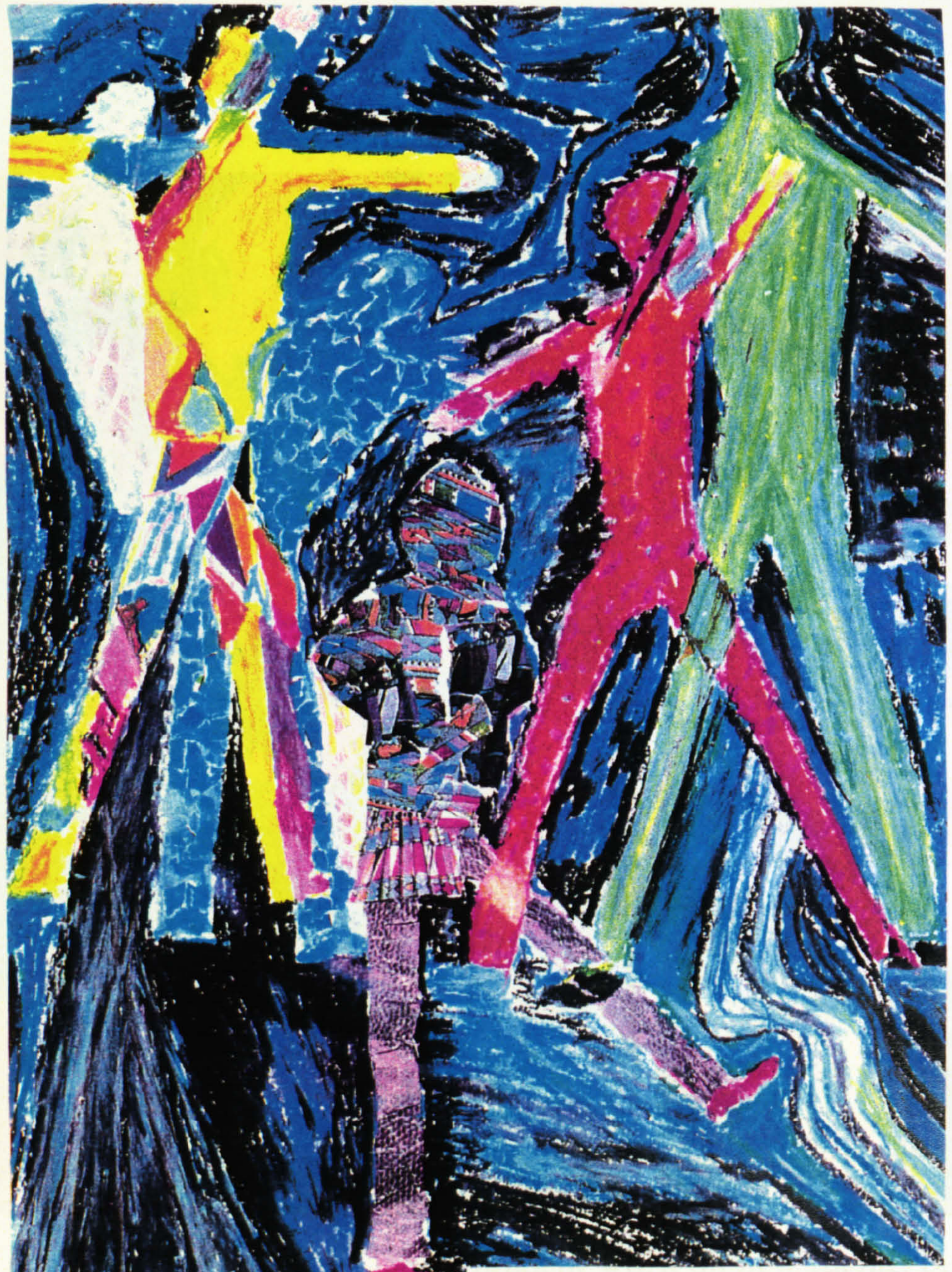
An important outcome of the experience in stage C, was a strong awareness among the teachers of what it is in their classrooms and their teaching problems that they needed to research. This gave them a clearer understanding of what action research is and how it is of value in their work.

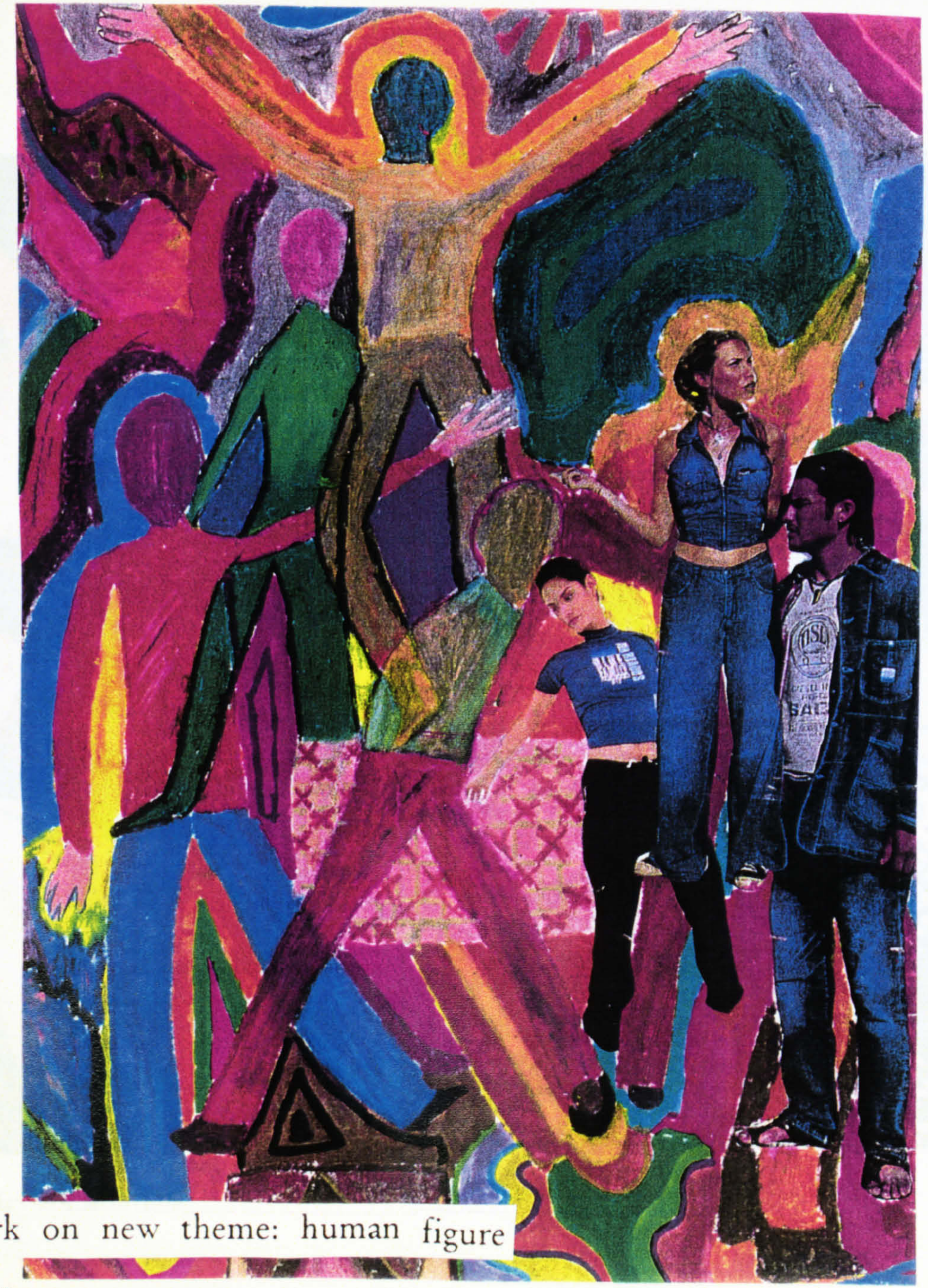
Not all problems in the classroom are worth researching or could lead to improvement in practice. Classroom researchers need to evaluate what is worth researching. This was indicated when they exhibited better control of decision-making through their choices about what works for them and their students in classroom situations. The process was interpreted to fit their own contexts. For example, student questionnaires were chosen to collect data on why students have no interest in art. Subsequently, the team discovered that student self-evaluation questionnaires proved to be a valuable teaching tool and it was worth promoting in investigating further student learning. Furthermore, Tasoulla clarified the team's position on the art curriculum: "Our main objective as a group was this: the art curriculum was static, we couldn't use it creatively, we couldn't understand it and so we decided to change its methodology allowing for more independence for students. This we did through group discussions and constant experimenting"

(Tasoulla, joint meeting, October, 94). Aspects of the art curriculum were examined in relation to students' lack of interest through an attempt to test strategies for giving continuity to learning through a better organized curriculum.

Classroom research took on significant importance when the team became increasingly confident in deciding what was worth researching and which data-collecting techniques were best suited to their students' idiosyncrasies. At this point it was clear that the group were securely embarked upon action research. Although my account ends here, the group has continued to meet and to work collaboratively to improve their practice.

Color Plate 3.20 Students working on new themes





Color Plate 3.21 Student work on new theme: human figure

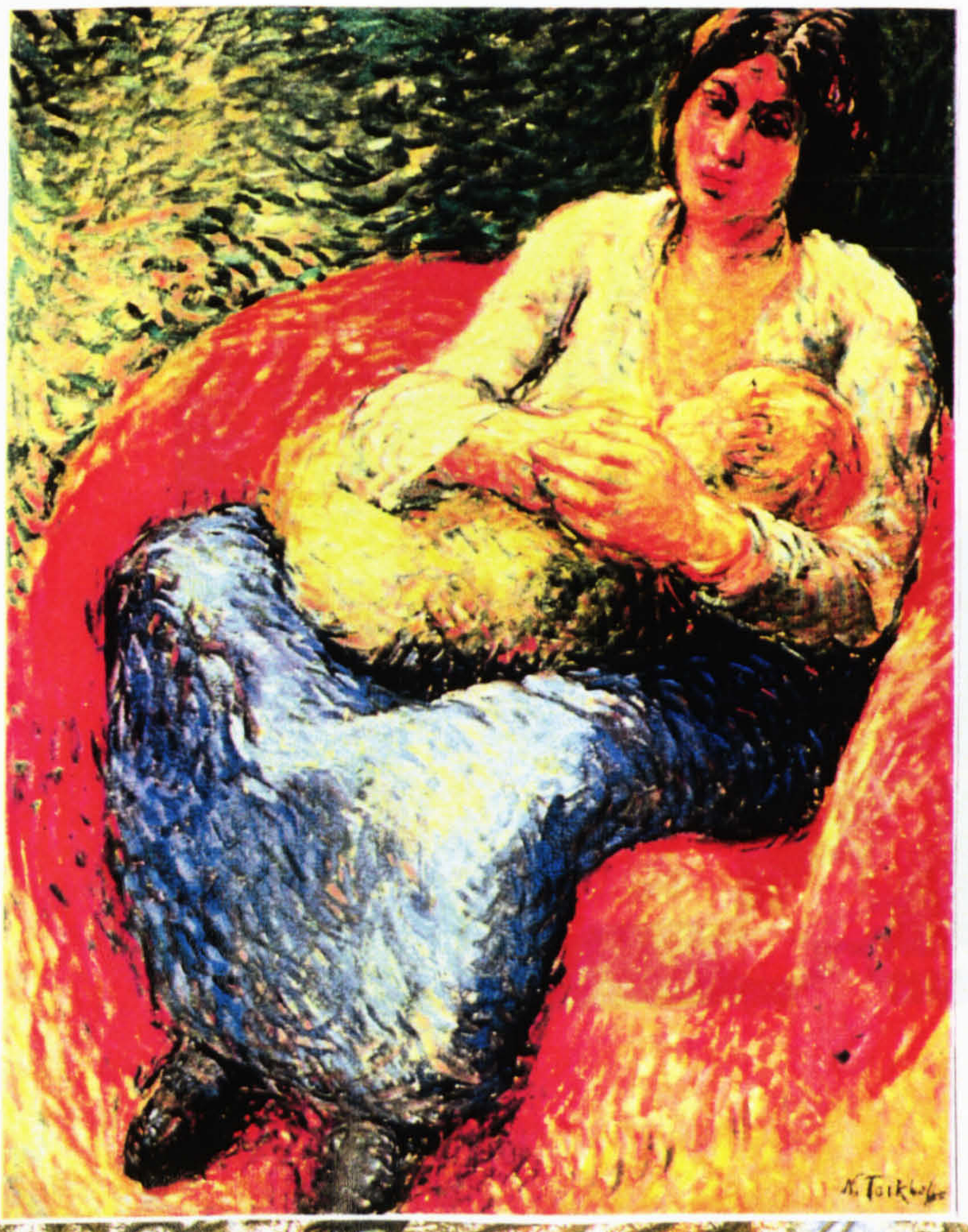
Color Plate 3.22 Student work on new theme: birds, fish, animals

Color Plate 3.23

Visual aids for new theme:
human figure

Color Plate
3.24

Visual aids for new theme: birds, fish, animals



Color Plate
3.25

Visual aids for the new theme:
mother's bond

Color Plate 3.26 Team in search for visual aids for Europe

Color Plate 3.27

Visual aids for European Competition

Color Plate 3.28 Draft for Dissemination pamphlet

PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION!

LET US PUT AN END TO
DEAD-ENDS
READY FORMULAS
STRESS

LET US EXAMINE A NEW WAY OF DOING THINGS IN EDUCATION WHERE

THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHER IS THE DECISION-MAKER

THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHER CREATES CHANGE

THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHER CREATES HIS/HER OWN THEORY AFTER TESTING IDEAS IN PRACTICE

THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHER POSES CRUCIAL QUESTIONS REGARDING 'REAL' CLASSROOM PROBLEMS HE/SHE RESEARCHES THOSE PROBLEMS IN HIS/HER CLASS

THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHER LEARNS TO COLLABORATE WITH OTHER COLLEAGUES IN FINDING SOLUTIONS AND TESTING THEM THROUGH RESEARCH

EVERYTHING MAKES MORE SENSE. IT IS NOT BASED ON THEORY OR FORMULAS

5 STEPS TO VICTORY:

1. We define a Key problem which we are all awave of. This time all the members unanimously agree that this is truely a problem that needs to be dealt with.
2. We discussed possible reasons of why problems exist. We got students involved in this quest through questionnaires.
3. We suggested possible solutions. After a lot of discussion within the group of colleagues we saw the light: the 'solution' to be tried out.
4. Through observations on classroom activity and discussion, we have selected themes and methods of presenting them to students.

For motivation we used visual aids from student work and recent artists. The objective was not to present an attractive art lesson, but a lesson which will help raise student interest and give him sense of learning and some independence of working.

5. All the members of the group taught in their classrooms the same theme and the same approach. After the student work, self-evaluation questionnaires were collected from all classroom situations and discussed by the group. We still found weak points in the approach, so through further discussion we improved on it.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. Do all your students get involved in the Art class?
2. What teaching methods do you use?
3. Do you enjoy Art teaching?
4. Do you think your students are happy with you as their teacher? If Yes, why?
5. Do you ever collaborate with other teachers to solve problems in your class? If Yes, does this help you in any way?
6. Will you collaborate with colleagues if you got the chance?

PART 3

CONCLUSIONS

Chapter: **7**

Reflecting on the Research Questions

This research was not meant to be exhaustive or conclusive with reference either to change or to teacher development and curriculum development. It did however, attempt to offer possible answers to certain crucial questions and raise new issues for future consideration, particularly within the context of Cyprus. In chapter 1 an attempt was made to describe the problematic educational situation in Cyprus particularly in relation to concerns and problems in teacher isolation, lack of communication, a lack of teacher awareness about professional issues and about classroom issues. It was argued that these were at least partly due to an incompetent teacher development scheme as well as an inadequate art curriculum. These concerns resulted in a set of research questions which were then investigated via collaborative action research; the purpose was to examine teachers' responses to processes which might motivate them to change their teaching habits through their own efforts. The questions were:

- What is the nature of teacher development?
- How can teacher development be supported (especially in the case of art teachers in Cyprus)?
- What is the relationship between teacher development and curriculum development (especially in relation to the art curriculum in Cyprus)?

This chapter attempts to answer the research questions formulated for this study.

What is the Nature of Teacher Development?

The following section explores two principles regarding the nature of teacher development as manifested through the research: the puzzle principle and the stages of development in teacher awareness. This is followed by a reflection on both principles through a discussion showing how far current practice appears to ignore the principles I have identified.

The puzzle principle

I would like to suggest that the effectiveness of what I shall call the puzzle principle became evident through the research. By this term I refer to the process by which participants came to understand the interconnectedness of their problems. The puzzle principle assisted the participants to become aware of relationships. The growing capacity to discover links among all the problematic issues and to see them as pieces of the same unit allowed the team to proceed with more ease and confidence.

Before the experience, professional problems were perceived as separate, isolated problems and not as interrelated. This made them substantially more difficult to confront. However, as the team members sensed that their teaching was not effective, they asked themselves questions with regard to that ineffectiveness such as: ineffective compared to what? for whom? and why? Through this type of questioning, other issues (pieces of the main puzzle) came into play; such as, students' lack of interest in doing artwork, lack of student involvement in classroom matters and the inability of the art curriculum to offer effective learning experiences. Each question raised by the group stimulated the emergence of another interrelated question.

The puzzle principle echoes Elliott's notion of a "unified educational practice". "Action research integrates teaching and teacher development, curriculum development and evaluation, research and philosophical reflection, into a unified conception of a reflective educational practice. This unified conception has power implications inasmuch as it negates a rigid division of labour in which specialized tasks and roles are distributed across hierarchically organized activities. A unified educational practice empowers 'insiders', i.e. teachers. Inasmuch as outsiders' specialized tasks and roles can be justified, their aim must be to support and facilitate reflective educational practice without destroying the unity of its constituent parts. This can happen only if the more specialized activities have the subordinate function of nurturing the unity of reflective practice as opposed to imposing on practitioners a hegemony of specialist expertise with the function of externally regulating their activities" (Elliott, 1991, p. 54).

Based on my research my argument is that a more developmental strategy for teachers in Cyprus would aim to help them understand the process of teaching and learning as a process. They need to become aware that all issues relating to teaching, curriculum, students, self-development and evaluation are part of a unified educational process; and to appreciate the tight bond between teaching, learning, curriculum development and self-development.

Stages of development in teacher awareness

Looking at the outcomes of each phase in this research, it is apparent that there was a clear line of development. This development was reflected in three stages of growing maturity in teacher awareness:

Stage A: **Preparation-** teachers become aware of their rights as professionals to express opinions on the issues; gaining the right to question.
Stage B: **Incubation-** theory development takes place based on the understanding of practice through the procedures of classroom research.
Stage C: **Confirmation-** theories developed by practitioners are validated; extending acquired skills.

Stage A: **Preparation**

Through the initial discussions in Phase I (chapter 4) the team "woke up" to their right as professionals to talk about their existing teaching theories. The participants were asked to offer their views on issues relating to their teaching, particular classroom problems, in what ways each perceived her own classroom reality and how each interpreted her own teaching effectiveness and need for improvement. As a result, they realized that it is important to think, discuss and in general consider these issues in improving teaching practice.

During the introduction of the innovations of action research and collaborative work, team members were given time and space to offer their own response to these new ways of working. This had implications for the way they adapted new procedures to fit their own particular classroom and its on-going activity, and not simply to apply them directly in the classroom context as an imposed task. Following this, the acceptance of the innovations became easier because the modification rendered the innovation less threatening.

Through the processes of Discussion and Communication, in Phase II (chapter 5) collaborative effort allowed the participants to feel free to think and talk. This allowed an exhaustive discussion of views and opinions leading to the identification of the central problematic issues in their teaching. Following this, it became possible to challenge established art teaching theories. As a result, the team's perceptions of classroom problems developed along with an increased awareness about the possibilities for improving teaching. Common concerns about teaching problems emerged leading to the initial questioning of the team's teaching effectiveness and the art curriculum.

The value of understanding hidden values and perceptions about teaching as an initial preparation to doing research on practice became evident. "The purpose of this process of question and answer is to raise tacit knowledge to consciousness. The aim of teacher education and on-going professionalisation should be to help teachers make explicit their tacit understanding, so that teachers may show, in a rigorously scientific manner, how they may improve that understanding,..." (McNiff, 1993, 40). Teachers need to talk about their existing theories. "One of the realities of schooling is that teachers possess their own theories about what they do, what is reasonable, feasible and possible in classroom teaching. This is invariably knowledge based upon lived experiences, rather than the wisdom of outside experts" (Smyth, 1991, p. 103). The stage of Preparation offered the participants the opportunity to bring those personal theories to the surface. Their personal perceptions became significantly more valuable than the imposed theories of outsiders with reference to teaching improvement. They gained their right as professionals to express perspectives on their classroom work. This importance was validated collaboratively.

Stage B: **Incubation**

As described in the Processes of Phase III (chapter 6) a dynamic and focused interaction about the main focus for research took place through the problem-development process and the student-feedback process. Each was followed by a systematic analysis, testing, observation and documentation of class activity through classroom research procedures. As a result, the practitioners were able to develop theories using a shared language to communicate with each other. Based on their new-found awareness, they were able to develop new theories about the student's role as it related to the classroom business of learning. They were then able to consider the adequacy of the old established strategies and compare their effectiveness in the classroom.

The comparison led to the development of new teaching methodologies characterized by clarity. This clarity had been achieved by testing new alternatives in the form of:

- trying new roles for both teachers and students; students were given more independence; teachers became researchers, critics and learners of classroom matters;
- trying new teaching methods; giving up old teaching habits;
- evaluating student products through specific criteria;
- offering students the opportunity to contribute directly to their evaluation, learning and problem-solving through student self-evaluation questionnaires and an emancipated expression of ideas; recognizing the value of student involvement in classroom business;
- examining closely the new teaching method by monitoring systematically the process;
- taking nothing for granted; learning to question classroom activity.

Through the new structure it became possible for teachers to incorporate student feedback into their teaching approaches. Their own role was re-examined in relation to student interest and the student's role as a partner in the classroom and not merely an implementor of teacher's instructions. Old established theories were challenged by developing new ones as an outcome of classroom research. "When we are engaged in classroom research we can be said to be engaged in educational theorizing because we are reflecting systematically and critically on practice" (Hopkins, 1985, p. 54). "Theories are not born and killed, but may be gradually synthesised into new patterns" (McNiff, 1988, p. 8). Moreover, "....research offers a way of marking out a path of professional development: it offers a way of structuring a familiar situation that allows the teacher to explore it in depth, to gain

insights, to set new goals, and to achieve new levels of competence and confidence. Teaching is vulnerable to the flattening effect of habit, and research can help teachers see behind what is taken for granted in everyday practice" (Rudduck, 1991, p. 105). The teacher "is not faced with the problems of generalizing beyond his experience. In this context, theory is simply a systematic structuring of his understanding of his work" (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 157).

There was evidence that the team members were thinking critically about student learning. For example, the decision to give students a more explicit account of art concepts than had previously been normal practice showed that teachers were developing theories about their students' learning. Rowland (in Hustler, Cassidy and Cuff, eds., 1986) argues for classroom enquiry as a way of understanding learning in students. "A more careful investigation of what children's activity really means requires not only time but a certain 'intellectual space': an opportunity to reflect, preferably with others, and to develop and share insights into the children's concerns, skills and understandings....,the in-depth study of selected samples of activity from our classrooms can lead us to challenge, modify and at times radically alter those assumptions from which we work when we interact with children in the classroom" (p. 29).

An important outcome of the study was the confirmation of the value of theory-development by teachers themselves. McNiff (1993) comments on Whitehead's views on theory development: "What is necessary, says Whitehead, is that teachers should be encouraged to develop their own theories of education from, and through, their own practices: that is, they should be encouraged critically to examine aspects that they feel need improving, and to work systematically to thinking how (building theories) to carry out the improvement" (McNiff, 1993, p. 39).

Other writers have endorsed this view. Elliott (1991) writes of the value of developing one's own theories when he comments that theories produced by 'outsiders' for 'insiders' are invalid and non-applicable to solving problems and therefore improving practice; "....the feelings of threat may be enhanced if the knowledge generated is couched in the form of generalizations about teachers' practices. If it applies to all contexts of practice, then it implies that the experience of teachers operating in particular circumstances is not an adequate basis on which to generate professional knowledge: this contradicts their own self-understanding. Generalization constitutes the denial of the individual practitioners' everyday experience. It reinforces the powerlessness of teachers to define what is to count as knowledge about their practices" (p. 46). Hopkins (1985) argues that the non-applicable theory is too general and used as guide to practice as a ready formula. "In many instances, the gap between theory and practice is so large that it prevents any useful connection. This occurs because our theories are often not specific enough, or the propositions they contain are not easily generalized to individual situations" (p. 54).

"...for educational theory to have any subject-matter at all, it must be rooted in the self-understandings of educational practitioners" (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p. 129). The authors clearly communicate the notion that teacher control is essential in the development of theories. This empowers teachers.

The need for empowering the teachers takes a strong stance here. "The idea of 'self knowledge' is an important one in this context. It refers to the individual internalization of ideas that empowers the person. It refers to those moments of clarity and power that occur when we understand a concept and see how we can use it in our personal or professional lives" (Hopkins, 1985, p. 55).

Theory-development through classroom research discoveries can help the teachers to understand why old teaching theories do not work and to justify concerns of the ineffectiveness of these existing theories. Theories created by teachers themselves are useful to classroom teaching; they are considered to be true because they can be used to solve unique classroom problems which are relevant to the teachers. And they further empower teachers.

Stages C: **Confirmation**

Theories need to be validated through processes of continued testing against new problems and through public scrutiny. For this group this happened in various ways. For example, through

- practical implementation in the classroom after reflecting on the testing of a new strategy and re-planning;
- exposing the theory-in-practice to public scrutiny by exhibiting student art work in school for all colleagues to see and to comment on as compared to previous work exhibited.
- peer-acceptance through group meetings through the reporting and reflecting on data collected;
- applying the theory to new-found problems (frequency of applicability);
- the strong willingness of the team members to advertise their findings through dissemination;
- student-feedback through their self-evaluation questionnaires.

Validating one's theories proved to be the final factor in the process of acquiring skills to improve teaching. Validating personal theories proved to be a long and unfolding process; not an immediate one.

Some authors in their definition of theory-development combine theory development and theory validation as happening simultaneously. My view is that validating theories is not the same as developing theories because it occurs under different circumstances.

Current conceptions of teacher development in Cyprus

The new model of teacher development proposed through the discussion about the three stages of development in teacher awareness highlights three important aspects of the process of developing teachers: A teacher development scheme needs to foster a gradually unfolding (developmental) procedure. Therefore it takes time. Furthermore, this development needs to take place in teacher awareness in order to empower the teacher. Stage development indicates that in order to reach a stage of acquiring a set of skills teachers need to pass through other stages. It is not an immediate response on their part. This development implies that the one-day seminars are not appropriate to develop in teachers awareness and skills necessary for confronting teaching problems. Below I shall demonstrate how far current practice in Cyprus, appears to ignore the principles I have identified in the previous section.

In light of the puzzle discovery, the existing teacher development scheme in Cyprus continues to be ineffective because it adheres to a methodology of identifying issues as isolated problems, thus breaking up the notion of a "unified educational practice" that could "empower" teachers. It separates curriculum development from teaching practice. The curriculum is considered the job of outside experts and teaching the job of teachers. Teachers are not considered by the system to be well equipped to plan a curriculum.

The stage of Preparation gives the teachers the opportunity to "wake-up" to their existing theories. Besides, collaboration offers a "mutual-interest" audience with an appreciation and interest in what teachers have to say. These are completely ignored by current practice since teachers opinions are not sought with regard to important issues. There is no one willing to listen to them. I want to suggest that inspectors tend to inhibit teachers' professional growth by inhibiting their Preparation stage through the denial of the free expression of their personal perceptions on classroom experience.

Once teachers realize that they have the right to express how they perceive their classroom activity, they can free themselves from the timid attachment to theory-driven teaching. Unless personal perspectives on the issues are brought to the surface through the Preparation stage, they cannot be examined. This stops classroom research as well since by examining various perspectives problems can be chosen and strategies can be planned in order to test new alternatives through classroom research. Therefore, before classroom research into the alternatives could begin at all, there is a need for a period of enlightenment and awakening through focused teacher interaction during the Preparation stage. For teachers in Cyprus, this is a crucial and needed initial stage in any teacher development scheme.

Since there is no Preparation stage in the existing teacher development procedures, it follows that no Incubation stage can develop either. I suggested

that during the Incubation stage theory-development (by teachers themselves) takes place as a result of classroom research. Since current practice does not promote theory-development by teachers it follows that there is no challenge of old established theories and therefore, no improvement of these theories can result. Moreover, I would like to argue that useful theories (as opposed to imposed theories devised by outside experts) develop which are understandable and acceptable to teachers since they are developed through their own intervention about their concerns regarding their classroom realities.

Compared to the new model, the current teacher development procedures in Cyprus are not educationally valid. They do not relate to educational issues since teachers, students and the context are ignored. Classroom activity is perceived as static and unchangeable; to which ready formulas can be applied successfully. Furthermore, teachers are perceived simply as technicians to be trained and not to be developed as people and as professionals.

The new model, however, appears to be a valid educational procedure. It provides opportunities for growth which allow teachers to learn in an informal setting and at their own pace; according to their own professional needs. Furthermore, teachers can express their true opinions due to the absence of the ordinary obstacles (official influence and imposed tasks) which tend to forge personal perspectives and concerns. Furthermore, the processes involved encourage teachers to learn due to the feeling of security which motivates their work.

McNiff (1993) discusses the need for educational research to be genuinely educational. "The person doing the research needs to be prepared to shift ground, because her intentions, in embarking on her enquiry, are (a) to change her thinking, and (b) to change actions in line with new thinking. Such change constitutes the nature of education; the creation of new forms of being is the implicit notion of 'education' " (p. 51). The processes teachers become involved in must allow for a comfortable and voluntary shift in thinking and in actions.

It can be argued that through the new model it is easier for change to take place because participants can gain the power and the skills necessary for finding ways towards achieving change. Figure: 4.1 illustrates the development of such skills as the building-up of teachers' awareness. With current practice change cannot take place. Mere willingness on the part of the teachers to bring about change is not sufficient. They need to have the strategies to bring about change. This involves helping them to develop their capacity to ask the appropriate questions about what they want to change and to plan the means to discover answers to those questions.

"Teachers are not encouraged to decide for themselves what is most useful and appropriate, but perform according to the theory. This approach tends to encourage stasis rather than development" (McNiff, 1988, p. 13).

McNiff's comments highlight the basis of the ineffectiveness in the existing teacher development scheme in Cyprus which does not merely stress theory-driven teaching but stops any teacher growth in developing awareness on their practice. This limits their confidence as professionals. They are not offered the opportunity to experience the development of their own rules (in the form of theories) but instead they are given rules that do not apply to their own "teaching game". In this sense, the teacher always loses.

How Can Teacher Development be Supported (especially in the case of art teachers in Cyprus)?

This research perceived the development of teachers as a voluntary change. It revealed a number of principles which appear to underpin effective teacher development strategies. These include creating incentives for the participants, pacing the process, the effectiveness of the bottom-up approach, and the value of collaboration. A discussion of these will be followed by some suggestions of ways in which the teacher development policy in Cyprus might be improved along the lines described below.

Creating incentives for the participants

An important aspect of managing change is sustaining participants' interest in the work itself. This can be accomplished by devising various forms of incentives. There are times when teachers' interest is low and might need uplifting and reassurance and other times when it can be high and needs to be sustained at that level. Support in the form of showing concern about teachers' views regarding various innovations is essential in ensuring continuing interest.

One technique which can be used to maintain participants' interest is to clarify what is going on in the process as it unfolds. This clarification can be achieved by occasionally pulling things together. This works as a reminder of the activities and accomplishments that can possibly take place within a group process. Teachers need to be given the chance to evaluate progress and talk about how it affects them. They can very well offer suggestions about possible improvements in the way things are developing and indicate crucial points that are worth looking into further. Team members themselves must make the choices.

Not all meetings of groups need to be devoted to devising plans for testing solutions in real classroom conditions. Some meetings can be used as resting periods where the change facilitator can check whether the members understand the principles, activities and problems they are working with.

Another technique which can help is the introduction of appropriate issues at the "right" time during the process. This can prove to be crucial to the healthy

participation of the participants as the "moving force" behind the process. It can be accomplished by picking up on signals presented by the teachers and raising the appropriate issue when the team appears to be ready to deal with it. Furthermore, the person chiefly responsible for a group, needs to be acutely aware of shifts in emphasis during discussions in order to link identified problems with possible strategies. Group readiness is an important aspect to be aware of.

During a development process there is a continuing need to raise team members' interest. First, this can be achieved by collecting their scattered suggestions and putting them into an organized framework at the initial meetings. This can provide some group coherence. Secondly, developing key problems to investigate instead of isolated classroom problems can also become useful in exhibiting the importance of the effort. Finally, interest in the group's work can be significantly raised when teachers can experience the practical aspect of action research. Dealing with and solving the problems in practical terms, can prove to be very important to the participants in securing their commitment and willingness to learn and improve.

Pacing the process

The entire process of change can often take longer than assumed at the beginning. Delays can be allowed because the procedure of action research should be measured against existing teaching realities and real obstacles. This would reveal teachers' genuine feelings and responses regarding the process. There needs to be a concern about whether obstacles can lessen teachers' interest. Forcing the process through imposed, unrealistic situations would give a false sense to its development and limit its impact on teachers. Besides, the main objective is not for the teachers simply to go through the process of action research, but rather to examine how teachers could go through it, considering obstacles and the real classroom settings they work in. The process must be made applicable to the unique educational scene considering the existing obstacles and the teachers' needs as people and professionals.

If the change facilitator loses his/her patience and attempts to promote action research as the right way of improving practice, then there is a good chance that the teachers involved will lose interest. If action research is offered as a final formula for success, this immediately excludes teachers' own perspectives on the matter. It would inhibit their interest by making them feel that they are losing control. The process must be allowed to develop naturally through obstacles such as delays, teachers' fears and scepticism. The presence of obstacles allows them to examine the various ways through which they can deal with problems.

Teachers come across many obstacles. The main ones are their busy schedules, and the fact that they are tired from the unrealistic demands of school life. In order for teachers to retain their interest in the group effort, first, they must

wish to clear up things in their teaching and to learn something new. Second, they need to enjoy the support they get from the other members of the group. They must feel that it helps through seemingly insoluble problems. And finally, they need to discover what is successful and what is not in ways of dealing with classroom problems by developing criteria to help them in making critical judgments.

Appropriate pacing lays certain obligations on the change facilitator:

1. a change facilitator should not exhibit excitement over insignificant things that might lead nowhere or over ambitious goals that are difficult to reach;
2. a change facilitator exhibits patience and gives time for things to mature; providing breathing space to the teachers;
3. a change facilitator must be alert to important issues which must be emphasized and bring them to the group's attention for follow-up and research;
4. a change facilitator must be helping and explaining the process along by devising ways for group members to understand the principles involved, and incentives for sustaining their interest in the group effort until they are able to take control;
5. a change facilitator must not give teachers too much at the beginning of the change process, but rather proceed in small stages. The participants cannot assimilate it all at once, and the initial introduction is crucial in shaping the way teachers can accept the new idea;
6. a change facilitator must show excitement about teachers' ideas.

Effectiveness of the bottom-up approach in the management of the change process

The bottom-up approach used to promote an innovation is useful in the management of the change process. Teachers respond favorably to this method of introducing an innovation. They become more self-confident and show a willingness both to admit to limitations in their teaching and to change teaching habits. They are able to help themselves after the experience. Teachers become interested in change when they are asked to form the change themselves in their classrooms. In doing so they learn to overcome obstacles and share concerns. The absence of outside experts alleviates inhibitions and anxiety and promotes teacher willingness to become more deeply involved in the process of improving teaching.

During a teacher-driven change process, teachers feel that their sincere feelings, views and problems are considered. This feeling of security motivates them to work thus facilitating the management of change. Besides, "...research and development which does not involve the teacher at the centre of the development process is likely to have little effect in changing teaching behaviour and attitudes. Action research begins with the teacher's perceptions

of what is happening in her or his classroom..." (Gurney in Lomax, ed., 1989, pp. 22-23).

Collaboration

Not all forms of collaboration can bring encouraging results. Therefore, the following section explores what needs to take place during collaborative work in order for it to be a growing and learning experience for teachers. This is followed by a comparison to a weak form of collaboration.

Collaboration is a multi-faceted process. During group work, many views are heard simultaneously on the same problem or issue. This gives the teachers the opportunity to perceive a problem from a variety of viewpoints, thus considering every aspect of an idea before making any decisions about it. "Collaboration provides teachers with many different perspectives" (Oja and Smulyan, 1989, p. 15). A further characteristic is the increasing sophistication of "teacher talk". Teacher talk must not be ignored in a collaborative setting because it creates the agenda for the joint meetings. In strong collaborative settings, solutions emerge from what teachers themselves suggest.

A strong collaboration is flexible and gives time to the participants to mature. In productive forms of collaboration, group members' commitment is developmental. Even though collaboration can be beneficial to teachers, team members need to develop readiness and self-confidence as individuals before they move on to group work. "It is not possible to have strong collaborative cultures without strong individual development" (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992, pp. 82 - 83).

Moreover, collaborative support cannot work effectively on its own. Clearly, three principles need to be adopted by the team members to help them guide their activities in a strong form of collaboration. Critical reflection on practice, collaborative effort in solving problems and the development of a shared view of the teacher as a researcher in his/her own classroom.

The above discussion defined a set of principles which suggests a "genuine" form of collaboration. This form of collaboration benefits the teachers by making the sharing of problems possible. This allows team members to feel more relaxed, more humane and good about themselves, thus minimizing anxiety through the realization that each member is not the only one experiencing teaching problems. Discovering self-limitations is another possible effect of a genuine collaborative process. Hesitant teachers feel more comfortable and secure in expressing their own views about what concerns them through the motivation that can be created by the other team members.

Through the three principles of collaborative effort, critical reflection on practice and research existing in a genuine group effort, teams of collaborators are able to keep on opening doors to discoveries. Once teachers become

aware of doing research into their classrooms they can discover the way to stimulate student feedback. Student feedback can direct them to question critically their teaching material in relation to student interest. This can lead to questions about what would be interesting learning for those particular students. "Collaborative cultures create and sustain more satisfying and productive work environments. By empowering teachers and reducing the uncertainties of the job that must otherwise be faced in isolation, collaborative cultures also raise pupil achievement" (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992, p. 67). Figure: 4.2 seeks to illustrate the opening doors principle present in genuine collaborative cultures.

Genuine collaboration facilitates teacher learning because during the exchange of ideas each member is able to examine and complete his/her own ideas through others' perceptions thus resulting in a more constructive feedback. This process improves teaching because teachers can realize that alternatives exist. In a state of isolation, teachers lose sight of the fact that there are always alternatives to any form of practice.

In Chapter 2 of this thesis the theoretical investigation revealed that collaboration among teachers needs to be strong in order to sustain teacher development. It is interesting to draw a contrast between the teacher-driven genuine form of collaboration suggested here and the weak form of collaboration which Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) define as contrived collegiality.

Fullan and Hargreaves argue that this is a form of collaboration that does not lead to teacher growth. A comparison is formed between genuine collaboration and contrived collegiality. The former offers an informal and comfortable setting in which question raising moves on to teacher-driven inquiry into problem-setting and problem-defining. This contrasts with the existing teacher development courses where question raising is perceived as a sign of incompetence. The flexible procedure of collaboration permits honest views and feelings to come through. The teachers are free to select problems and procedures by questioning the inadequacy of old established theories and ways of doing things. "....we want to emphasize that the search for strong, effective forms of collaboration must create the conditions where teachers can raise and address critical, intrusive questions:....." (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992, p. 65).

Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) say that "contrived collegiality can be reduced to a quick, slick administrative surrogate for collaborative teacher cultures. Such cultures take much more time, care and sensitivity to build than speedily implemented changes of an administratively superficial nature. If done badly, contrived collegiality can *reduce* teachers' motivation to cooperate further. Building collaborative cultures involves a long developmental journey. There are no easy short cuts" (p. 79). This comment echoes the maturing principle suggested in genuine collaboration.

Other weak forms of collegiality described by Little (in Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992) tend to be part collegiality. Little refers to scanning and storytelling, help and assistance, and sharing ideas. According to the developmental character of genuine collaboration that I am suggesting, these can be seen as early forms of collaboration which later can be extended to a stronger form of joint work. A strong form of joint work needs to pass through the other stages suggested as weak forms of collaboration by Little. A team's perception of collaboration tends to develop from communication (simply expressing ideas) to exchanging teaching strategies and finally to combining efforts for resolving their concerns.

Hargreaves (in Hargreaves and Fullan, eds., 1992) comments on weak forms of teacher talk in individual teacher cultures (as opposed to collaborative teacher cultures) that lead to no essential improvements. They argue that there is a low level of discussion in cultures of individualism. Teacher talk in genuine collaboration, however, can develop into a more purposive dialogue where teachers' individual judgments may be challenged; raising the dialogue steadily towards higher levels of critical discourse.

Chatting is discussed by Little (in Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992) as a weak form of collegiality leading nowhere. However, items of the initial chatting can be guided to more austere activities. The group coordinator must be able to help team participants to direct the mere chatting of the initial stages to a more constructive talk which can lead to valuable research activities.

Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) quote Rosenholtz who observes, that collaboration in effective schools is related to opportunities for an on-going improvement and career-long learning. In these schools teaching improvement is a joint rather than individual effort and that evaluation, and experimentation in collaboration with colleagues are proper conditions for teacher improvement.

Through shared work and mutual support, change becomes easier to achieve. Under these circumstances each participant can be helped to make sense out of what the team is trying to change. Ideas need support to bloom. Through a genuine group support teachers are able to simplify the complicated world of their profession by identifying their priorities, whereas in isolation the teachers are confused and inhibited. The group support empowers them.

A practical INSET policy for Cyprus

The research effort reported here has suggested a number of principles necessary for teacher growth and development. The question remains of how to assimilate these principles into a practical INSET policy for Cyprus. How can the current situation be improved? what would be a better approach in helping teachers improve their practice?

Two questions will guide my discussion in this section: what should a teacher development course be doing for teachers if it is going to help them improve teaching? and which aspects of the Cypriot educational system need to be affected and how in order to achieve this?

Any teacher development course designed must be based on the following principles in order to help teachers improve: The course must develop teachers. It must be based on an unfolding, developmental procedure; giving enough time for teachers to mature. They must not be trained to simply follow established teaching formulas and teacher-proof curricula. This development must focus on teacher awareness. It must empower teachers with skills to solve their own teaching problems.

The areas that need to change if these objectives are to be achieved include: official influence (imposed policies, inspectors, head-masters), teachers, Pedagogical Institute seminars and people responsible for teaching teacher development courses. The statements below show in what ways each must change in order to meet the conditions I have identified as essential for genuine development; namely appropriate incentives, supportive pacing, "bottom-up" approaches and genuine collaboration. Incentives raise and sustain teachers' interest in the change process; pacing decides the smooth development of the process; bottom-upness creates a teacher-driven change and genuine collaboration offers security and support for an on-going professional growth.

a) official influence:
There is a need to limit the controlling power of inspectors and head-masters over teachers in Cyprus. The inspector's role as an evaluator should change to encompass an advisory role. The head-masters of schools need to limit their control over teacher activity. Innovations proposed by Ministry officials should pass through a period of interpretations and modifications by groups of teachers at each school. Reports of group work should be reported by teachers themselves to other school members at staff meetings devoted to pedagogical matters.

b) teachers:
Programs should start by going directly to ordinary teachers (bottom-up approach); giving them more power as decision-makers and responsibility in problem-solving. Teachers should be allowed to talk and develop their own strategies. Teachers should suggest issues for discussion for the seminars of the Pedagogical Institute. A network of groups of collaborators should be organized at junior high schools researching various problems. Teachers need time away from the tightness of school schedules to work out problems through researching new teaching strategies. Coordinators should be appointed for schools for the various subjects to develop these groups. They should be responsible for producing means of providing on-going support and follow-up for teachers. Teachers should be allowed to visit each other's

classrooms (to team-teach and to observe) and schools after they design their own visiting schedules. Teachers should be accountable to their group first and then to other teachers.

c) seminars of the Pedagogical Institute:
Incentives must be developed for teachers during the course of the Pedagogical Institute which aims at upgrading teachers. These courses must be taught at a slower pace with more resting periods and breathing space for ideas to mature between sessions. Time should be devoted to allowing teachers to express views on the seminars' purpose. Procedures need to be less threatening by starting with more practical ideas and only then leading on to theory where appropriate. Most development work for teachers should take place in classrooms and less at the Pedagogical Institute's lectures.

d) people teaching at the seminars:
People responsible for teaching at the Pedagogical Institute should be carefully chosen. They should be appointed as change-facilitators, as coordinators and as promoters of teacher-driven change rather than evaluators of teachers. They must be sympathetic to teachers' needs and consider their classroom problems. The coordinators' aim should be to get closer to teachers by exercising patience and showing excitement about their ideas. The new role would make this person less threatening to teachers.

The main thrust in making a workable teacher development programme for Cyprus should be to find ways of keeping the Ministry officials and their imposed policies from stopping the free flow of teachers' ideas about issues concerning their professions.

What is the relationship between teacher development and curriculum development (especially in relation to the curriculum in Cyprus)

My original concern on curriculum development was: how might the development of teachers stimulate awareness of curriculum planning and development? Keeping this concern in mind, I examined alternatives with regard to the teacher, the classroom, and the student as they relate to curriculum development. The investigation suggested that: imposed curricula are confining to teachers. They try unsuccessfully to fit them into their schedule. Teachers are simply trained to teach predetermined organized matter. However, in the literature the teacher is recognized as having substantial influence on the curriculum and as being a valuable source of curriculum knowledge since he/she is the one implementing the curriculum. The reality is that teachers establish the curriculum themselves during their classroom activities regardless of texts, curriculum guides and official policies. It is suggested that teachers' involvement in curricular issues is a healthy form of teacher development.

The literature further suggests that it is better for the teachers to build their own personal curriculum instead of implementing an imposed one. The curriculum should be a shared process between teachers and students; curriculum is what happens when students and teachers meet.

" My project" did manage to suggest that an effective teacher development program needs to devise conditions under which teachers can re-examine their purposes by asking the right questions about curriculum and reflecting on the validity of their teaching effectiveness. "If we are interested in substantial curriculum change, we may need to find structures and resources to help teachers to re-examine their purposes...and feel more in control of their own professional purposes and direction" (Rudduck, 1991, p. 94).

Rudduck's comment implies that teachers need to develop some sense of "ownership" in relation to the curriculum. Reaching a sense of curriculum ownership, however, was not a spontaneous event for the team members. It became evident that the team gained control through gradually unfolding stages involving a chain of activities which carried them towards a fuller comprehension of curriculum problems, and possible directions of tackling those problems. This teacher development process can stimulate curriculum awareness.

It is further argued that it is not possible to engage with the how questions of pedagogy without becoming concerned with the what questions of curriculum. I shall demonstrate that through the development process (chain of activities) teachers can become involved in constructive curriculum questioning and decision-making leading to serious concerns about pedagogy.

Questioning the curriculum

Teachers must be helped through teacher development to take a critical stance concerning the curriculum. The curriculum must be criticized by teachers. They need to define its limitations in relation to every-day classroom problems. The source for the critique is their classroom experience. But for teachers to question the curriculum they need opportunities to talk as well as an audience (of mutual-interest) to listen to them and appreciate what they have to say. The teacher development model I have described (Preparation, Incubation, Confirmation) offered teachers opportunities to ask questions regarding the curriculum in relation to problems concerned with students, teaching and classroom management.

Developing pedagogical concerns about the curriculum

What is the function of curriculum? what is a useful curriculum? Since the curriculum will be applied to children, then it is logical to ask or to be concerned with questions primarily about pedagogy and its effectiveness in terms of

student learning and not about subject-matter. For example, how does the curriculum facilitate students' understanding; how does it stimulate their interest; and how does it get all students involved in learning. Our concern should be to reach students; to stimulate their interest; to help them understand the content; to get all students involved in learning and self-evaluation and not simply to cover a prescribed amount of content. If curriculum is to fulfill its pedagogical function, these concerns must be provided for in its planning. A curriculum needs to have pedagogical objectives. Curriculum should go beyond the organization of lumps of subject-matter.

Pedagogical concerns can develop through long and exhaustive questioning by the teachers. The questioning in this project centered on the limitations of the curriculum as it relates to students and context. The inadequacy of the curriculum led to questions about the inadequacy of the teaching. The suggestion for a more student-centered teaching followed. Teachers wish to search for ways to stimulate student interest in learning; to alter the process of teaching according to students' response. There was an interest in the process which lies behind the products of student work in order to discover ways to stimulate student interest.

For teachers to develop concerns they need feedback from other colleagues as well as from students. If the concerns are to be pedagogical they must be validated by colleagues and students. Pedagogical concerns develop through proper critical questioning relating to the function of the curriculum.

Plan of action - discoveries - achievements

The Incubation phase allowed theory development on many issues concerning the curriculum.

New teaching strategies developed and were tested. Their aim was to solve real problems in students' learning; to test pedagogical concerns relating to students' better understanding, independence, involvement and interest in learning. Action research procedures enabled the construction of new structures for the curriculum while providing for better student learning. Much of this grew out of a clearer understanding of how students learn.

The relationship between curriculum development and teacher development

From the discussion above, it follows that there is a close and necessary link between curriculum development and teacher development. Curricula become more appropriate and useful when they are subjected to teacher critique and when teachers are actively engaged in adapting the curriculum guidelines with which they have been provided to their own classrooms and students. On the other hand, teachers become more professional when they are actively engaged in reflecting upon and taking decisions about their teaching; and central to their teaching is the curriculum with which they work.

A curriculum planned by experts outside schools can easily fall flat. No matter how good it looks in theory , in practice it can meet the following problems of implementation: students are not interested; students do not understand; students find it too much and too difficult for their ages; there is not enough time in the school schedule; large and difficult classrooms. When problems arise the teachers are not equipped to handle them because they did not grow as professionals. They must grow while raising and solving concerns about the curriculum by exercising critical reflection, research, questioning, taking responsibility for classroom problems. These activities can develop in teachers a shared language, develop awareness on connecting issues, develop criteria for student work and their teaching effectiveness. Following this, it can be argued that curriculum development and teacher growth are closely interconnected.

My conclusion is that there is little meaningful distinction to be made between teacher development and curriculum development. Clearly both in their turn are influenced by other factors and other situational constraints. But the interaction between them is of over-riding importance.

In this chapter I have dealt with the research questions. Specifically, I have set out three stages that the process of teacher development needs to follow to be a useful experience for teachers. Furthermore, I have discussed how teachers can develop an understanding of the curriculum while improving professionally. This provides us with an understanding of how teacher development can be the work of teachers themselves in their own classrooms. The final chapter will consider how far action research can be used as a strategy for teacher development and what type of change it can be expected to bring about in those who participate in it.

Chapter: **8**

Adequacy of the Methodology Assessing Change

This chapter will seek first to examine the adequacy of action research as a strategy for teacher development, and second to assess the type of change that took place in the participants and what the change might mean for Cypriot teachers.

Adequacy of the Methodology

I want first to focus on the various roles and interpretations action research took in each of the three phases of the research. This will be followed by some observations about what happens to action research methodology when put into action, leading into a brief reflection on implications for Cypriot teachers.

In Phase I of this research (Chapter 4) action research was perceived as an alternative to the current teacher development scheme and was used to convince possible participants of the existence of alternatives to the existing schemes of improving teaching. It created an awareness about issues not examined before; such as the gap between theory and practice, the student role, and research about teaching problems. Furthermore, it offered a rationale for educational dialogue on crucial issues to the teaching profession: an examination of the uniqueness of each classroom; practical and not theoretical procedures for problem-solving; experimental approaches rather than ready made formulas to improve teaching.

The main principles of action research were initially used to attract participants to this way of working. Its general principles made this new way of working appear much less threatening to the art teachers because they promised those involved constructive control over development without any outside interference. In Phase I, action research was used to make comparisons between the recent teacher development scheme and an alternative.

In Phase II (Chapter 5), action research was used as a tool in the intervention; a "way-in". Finally, in Phase III (Chapter 6) through action research the teachers assumed the roles of researchers and reflective practitioners in their own classrooms as a team.

In my project, the action research methodology proposed in the literature was adapted in the light of experience and unfolding events. Some of these accommodations can be explained in purely situation specific terms, but there are some broad questions which I wish to raise in terms of the action research

procedures discussed by theorists in the field. These concern the choosing of the problem, the sequencing of the process, and issues to do with motivation and incentives.

Choosing the problem

In the context of this project it did not seem to me that an isolated problem would offer sufficient stimulation to the team members to urge them to move towards taking action. It was rather the notion of action research as a practical strategy for solving practical classroom problems which interested and attracted potential participants. In the end, the problem finally chosen possessed the following characteristics: it was supported by all the group members; it was an issue of great concern to them; and if solved it could alleviate a great burden in their teaching since it could solve interrelated problems as well. The fact that the problem was chosen collectively justified the decision to focus on that particular problem. The key problem was generated by the team itself and it had the advantage of addressing a number of interrelated issues.

The problem researched by the team developed from an interest in the work students produced in the art class. This led to an interest in the process behind the product and a concern for student learning. The team decided to design three specific working papers for the students in order to enhance their understanding, give them more independence and minimize their lack of interest in learning. Thus the process of problem definition developed from a general, insignificant and vague idea into a focused, significant and crucial key problem. As a general idea, the problem did not possess enough impact to motivate teachers into taking action because it was not clear enough to indicate directions for developing a plan of action. As a general idea it did not convince the teachers that if resolved it could improve their teaching.

This experience tends to challenge other perspectives on the types of problems to be used for action research. Hopkins (1985) comments that "...when choosing a topic for classroom research make certain, at least initially, that is viable, discrete and intrinsically interesting" (p. 48). Elliott (1991) says: "The important criteria for selecting a 'general idea' are whether the situation it refers to (a) impinges on one's field of action and (b) is something one would like to change or improve on. The extent to which one is able to change or improve on it is a question which action research should address, rather than assume an answer to" (p. 72). Therefore, a question is raised. Does the degree of problem intensity affect teachers' interest and willingness in doing research on the problem? Might this phenomenon explain in some ways the slow interest exhibited by certain groups of practitioners participating in classroom research projects? I am not referring here to the complexity of the problem involving obstacles beyond teachers' reach, but rather its intensity relating to its value for improving teaching practice and therefore securing the interest and commitment of teachers in taking part in the action.

Sequencing the process

Figure: 1.6 in the Methodology (Chapter 3), illustrates the action reflection model developed for this study. Four of the steps were defined as the problem to be chosen; why it exists; possible ways out; and planning the implementation plan. These steps seemed to take place in the same process which shifted in emphasis and altered the original problem. In my project the step of why the problem existed did not come second but came at a later more mature stage in the research. Moreover, the plan of action unfolded along with the definition of the problem to be explored since the plan of action was affected by the importance of the selected problem itself. The shifting in the sequence of steps echoed the need to see action research as a highly flexible procedure and not a set of rigid steps to follow. They were not four separate steps. They were interwoven.

Figure: 5.1 seeks to illustrate the alteration of the sequence of the steps of the action reflection cycle. It begins by showing McNiff's (1988) model of generative capacity followed by my interpretation of a cycle of growing levels as I have suggested earlier in this study. Finally, it exhibits the transformation of the action reflection cycle (of growing levels) into a more flexible procedure, as implied after the implementation. In my original interpretation of the action reflection cycle I argued that through the cycle the focus of the main problem should not be lost. It is not lost, but rather deepened and clarified from the general idea through the process of reaching a unified problem. A unified problem was defined as a classroom problem which contains many interrelated problems.

Designing the plan of action was not a simple procedure of forward planning a sequence of activities; but rather specific action suited to teachers' conditions and capabilities. Many issues were raised until the teachers were able to reach a stage of personal commitment and were able to initiate action as their awareness grew through a series of developmental stages. Being able to initiate action on problem-solving presupposed that the questions of the what the why and the how about their concerns had been satisfactorily answered by the participants as well as the achievement of a certain degree of confidence.

I tend to agree with Hopkin's (1985) and Somehk's (1995) comments that one should not lay down rigid steps of a cycle but simply suggest ways of approaching the problem and techniques for data collection for monitoring classroom activity while experimenting with possible solutions. An action reflection cycle seems to predetermine the steps to be followed. What was learned from this experience, was that in practice the pace became a lot slower and the steps became fewer because they tended to merge at some points. The basic concept of the cycle: problem, why does it exist, planning a possible solution, acting, reflecting and planning again was initially taken up by the team

but eventually they developed their own method of working by interpreting each step. A set of flexible processes developed instead of a set of rigid steps.

Motivation and incentives

It has been argued that the accomplishment of specific tasks seemed to move the action cycle forward. For this forward movement to happen, team members needed to feel empowered and motivated. The empowerment and motivation occurred via activities through which they experienced their growing capacity both to think and to act. These were the development of a shared language to assist in communication based on common goals; the awareness of the value of student involvement, and the development of confidence as Phase III proceeded. Later this led on to valuable discoveries; such as, the development of criteria, to specific approaches to curriculum planning, and to a developed awareness of classroom activity. By the conclusion of the project teachers had developed a capacity for mature decision-making and critical judgement.

By reflecting on action, planning again and building on what the team learned from the experience, the team participants clearly questioned the value of the experience. At this stage the building aspect which followed reflection and re-planning was emphasized. It was important to build on the experience in order for it to have meaning. The team added a new step to classroom research. The building stage which was formed to evaluate what was worth building on from their learning experience, in a sense added the element of continuity by extending actions beyond the boundaries of the project.

Implications for Cypriot teachers

Action research theory was clearly transformed when it was exposed to the group process and the management of the process of change. The transformation can be explained by factors such as

- what the Cypriot teachers valued most regarding action research procedures;
- what the teachers could not use;
- what was modified through practice.

The team participants valued their own intervention in the process of improving their own teaching as well as the personal support they received through the group effort. It clearly helped these teachers to identify themselves as professionals. Moreover, the slow pace of the process of improvement was highly appreciated by the participants because their natural evolutionary development was emphasized and not a predetermined outcome as is the norm in the existing teacher development scheme.

However the team members could not support each other in their work place. They could not visit each other's classrooms and schools and observe each other. They were all positioned at different schools and they were not permitted by the system to visit other schools.

Thus action research could not be applied to practice in Cyprus in precisely the way it was presented in theory. Certain crucial issues interfered to adjust and transform the original theory thus making it a procedure that the participants could understand and relate to in their own reality. The team members suggested ways that action research procedures should be used. This involved which data-collecting techniques could be used in classrooms, which data was significant and which promising directions to follow.

Action research had to be transformed into a flexible procedure in order to suit Cypriot teachers. It needed to be sharpened in order for it to be a functional tool for this particular scene. This was a process which allowed for problem-solving within a flexible procedure which accommodated sudden shifts in classroom activity, students' mood and learning problems.

This transformation seemed to serve as strong enough evidence to support the notion that any teacher development scheme for Cyprus must be interpreted according to teachers' needs and teaching situations if it is to be effective; not to appear merely as a procedure to follow but rather as a workable tool. Moreover, it implied that no one method of developing teachers can be used as a guaranteed formula of success. In view of this experience, procedures should be shaped by the practitioners' own interpretations.

A further point must be argued here. Besides the need to transform and interpret the processes of action research to fit local conditions, it is also important to be aware of the limitations of the procedure. The extent of the change that can be achieved through this type of research is limited. Action research is well suited to dealing with issues at the school and classroom level, but it cannot reach wider scale problems at system level where policy is subject to all kinds of political pressure not to mention social and cultural constraints. The status quo is not easily undermined. Nevertheless, if such forms of professional development became widespread in Cyprus, the prevailing structures and roles would inevitably be affected and broader changes might well follow. The teachers who participated in this project - as we shall see in the final section of this chapter - certainly had aspirations at two levels: first to improve their own work, but second, to demonstrate to a wider audience (other teachers and the system) that change is possible.

Assessing Change

In this final section I propose to address a question first raised in chapter 3 concerning the change that took place in the participants after the experience.

I shall suggest that what happened was a genuine form of change. This is evidenced by the participants' ideas on dissemination. Due to this genuine change I argue that a new art teacher culture was formed with capacities to benefit Cypriot students. The benefits for the students justify the need for a new professional culture which needs to include other teachers.

Change in the participants

A variety of ways for disseminating the outcomes of the project are reported in chapter 6. It is interesting to consider how far these ideas about dissemination are a measure of change within the participants.

The only effective way to convince other colleagues that this is a worthwhile activity would be to allow them to experience the process from the beginning. Thus the team acknowledged the need for other colleagues to experience for themselves and not merely to hear about or to look at samples of innovative teaching strategies.

The suggestion for a book using the experience of these six art teachers indicates that the team recognizes the need to express a range of views on teaching issues. The suggestions on the final form of the pamphlet to be circulated to other art teachers (Color Plate: 3.28) is a strong indicator of the teachers' interpretations of their experience. Their intention to report their findings to the Pedagogical Institute shows the great significance this experience held for them. They wanted to invite others to participate in this joint effort at problem-solving.

The ideas about dissemination indicate the existence of a substantial change. However, a further concern was whether the process experienced through the research allowed for a genuine form of change and not a superficial one. Fullan (1991) describes two forms of nonchange: "false clarity occurs when people *think* that they have changed but have only assimilated the superficial trappings of the new practice. Painful unclarity is experienced when unclear innovations are attempted under conditions that do not support the development of the subjective meaning of the change" (p. 35).

According to Fullan's definition of weak forms of change, there is evidence of genuine change in the participants. This was revealed through their willingness to advertise their findings and to carry farther the innovation by assuming the role of the change facilitators themselves. If they had only assimilated the "superficial trappings" of the innovation, they would not have expressed so clearly and forcefully the way they understood what they had experienced, and also what needs to be done to approach other colleagues to introduce the new way of working. They exhibited an understanding of the process of change through the realization that if their innovative ideas were to reach out into the system, they needed to be extended to other

colleagues as well. This revealed a sense of continuity in their work which did not stop as the project drew to a close.

In 1981 Salter and Tapper wrote "Identifying the dynamic of educational change is one thing. Showing how that dynamic is expressed, or fails to be expressed, in the form of shifts in the educational structure, is quite another. It cannot be assumed that change will occur merely because the dynamic exists" (p. 50). They further refer to the need for the existence of "organic intellectuals" to promote the interests of a certain group. The team were concerned to develop a new stronger ideology for art teachers as an interest group in order for their subject to survive in schools and be respected as a learning experience for the students. They recognized the existence of obstacles in promoting their ideas but they were willing to move forward. They did assume an "organic intellectual" role since they did defend publicly the idea that learning does take place in the art class.

They further realized that outsiders need to be convinced, through strong documentation about the significant role of their subject in the hierarchy of school subjects. "No educational change can occur without ideological conflict between groups anxious to establish fresh legitimations of their position and possibly a reordering of the power hierarchy" (Salter and Tapper, 1981, p. 53).

The fact that these teachers were interested in disseminating their ideas is an indication that they had found the experience of their involvement to be both useful and stimulating through the discovery that teaching can be an exciting task.

A new teacher culture

This genuine change has the potential to establish a new type of art teacher culture which can stand up to competitive pressures from other subjects; a culture which can defend its beliefs strongly with documentation; a culture which believes that learning should and could take place in the art class. Such a culture offers a wider awareness with regard to the essential meaning of teaching and learning in the art room.

In such a culture teachers will recognize the need to escape from isolation and develop a shared language through collaboration. Change is possible because communication among teachers becomes much easier and focused. The new teacher culture shows concern for the student and a student-centered curriculum. It understands the process of change and its relationship to the subjective realities of the people involved.

These arguments about the emergence of a new teacher culture reflect House's definition of a cultural perspective on innovation. "A cultural strategy might find long-term ways of changing the teacher culture, such as by training the teachers to do research on their own classrooms"

(Quoted in Lehming and Kane, 1981, p. 39). In the midst of the problematic educational scene described in chapter 1, teachers were unable to act on problems. However, after acquiring a wider awareness on the issues, the emerging culture enabled teachers to take action towards solving problems. This wider awareness guided them to the development of new teaching approaches which were more student-centered which in turn made them see themselves as better teachers.

The need for a new teacher culture in Cyprus

Considering my original concern on education in Cyprus, it would appear that the significance of the new teacher culture tended to influence positively the way teachers worked and related to each other. The cultural change, however, did not seem to be as threatening for this action research group as argued by Elliott (1991) "...that action research as a 'cultural innovation' is inevitably threatening to the traditional professional cultures of both teachers and academic teacher educators" (p. 45). It appeared to be a natural and voluntary transformation.

The wider awareness gained through action research procedures gave teachers more developed capacities which all teachers need in order to be strong and effective: reflective thinking, critical judgment, responsibility, a willingness to tackle problems, confidence. These help teachers to make the right choices for their students by becoming sensitive to their problems and needs. Their decisions have a valid basis. They seek to theorize on the basis of their practice rather than simply to put to operation other people's theories.

The new teacher culture manifested in these art teachers needs to be extended to all Cypriot teachers if it is to bring these beneficial qualities to both teachers and students. In earlier chapters I have described the unadventurous and static situation in many Cypriot classrooms, paying particular attention to the teaching of art. Evidence from this study suggests that teaching and learning in Cypriot classrooms would be very favorably transformed if teachers were allowed to develop the professional independence and the sense of responsibility for their own work which projects such as the one described in these pages can engender.

Chapter 8 explored the adequacy of the methodology of action research and showed how some of the conventional approaches were modified into a flexible workable tool which met the needs of the teachers concerned. Action research managed to stimulate intelligent and productive thinking among these art teachers. The emergence of a genuine form of change in the participants was also discussed leading into an argument that due to this change a new art teacher culture developed within the team which was able to handle their own professional improvement and become better teachers for their students. It remains to be seen whether this approach to teacher development can be taken any further in Cyprus.

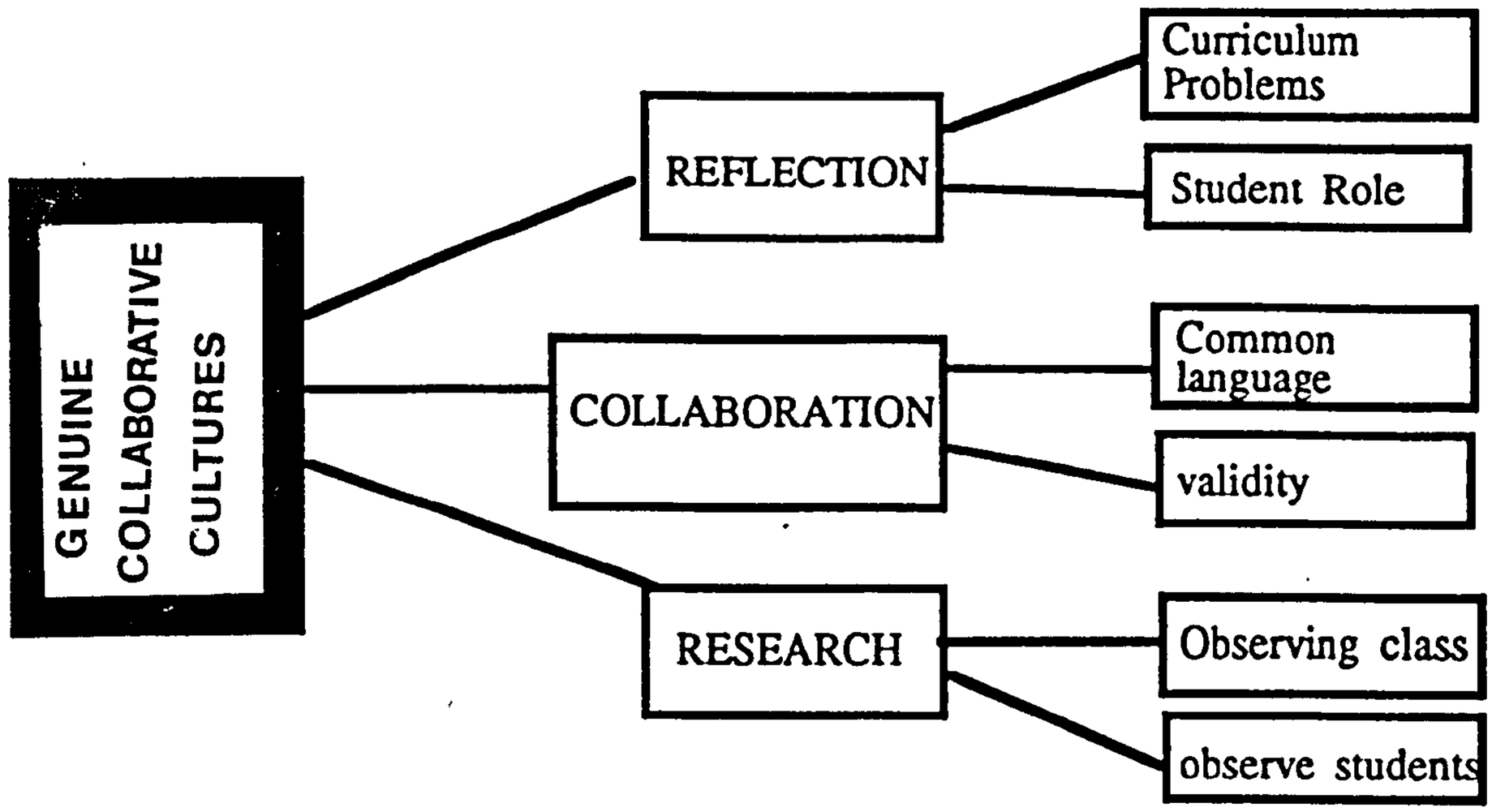


Figure 4.2 The opening doors principle

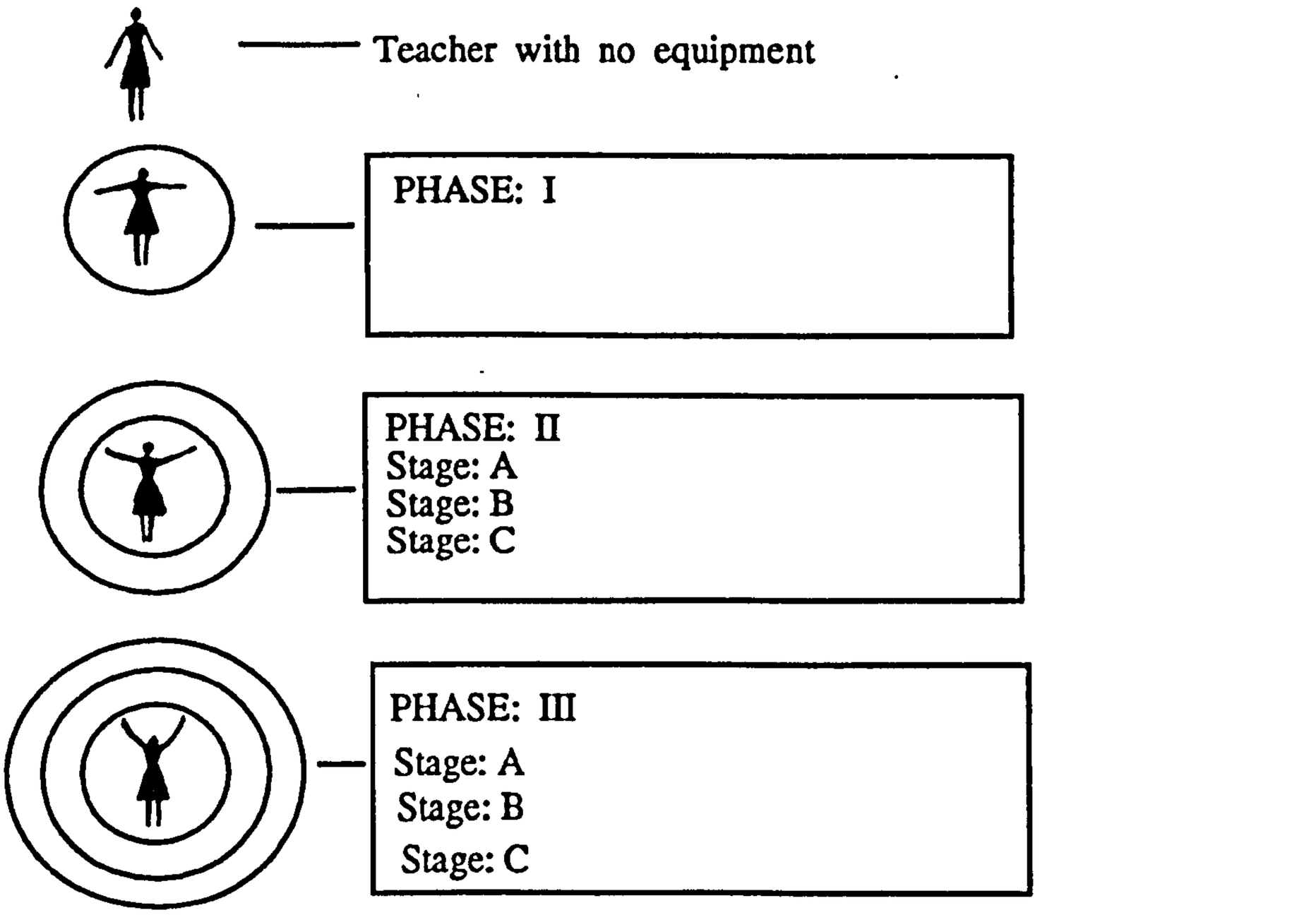


Figure 4.1 The circles of awareness principle

The circles of awareness around the teachers reveal how growth builded up around the teachers through the process of this research project. Teacher development deals with building awareness in teachers by supplying them with equipment to fight the complicated and problematic world of education; thus being able to achieve a change towards improvement.

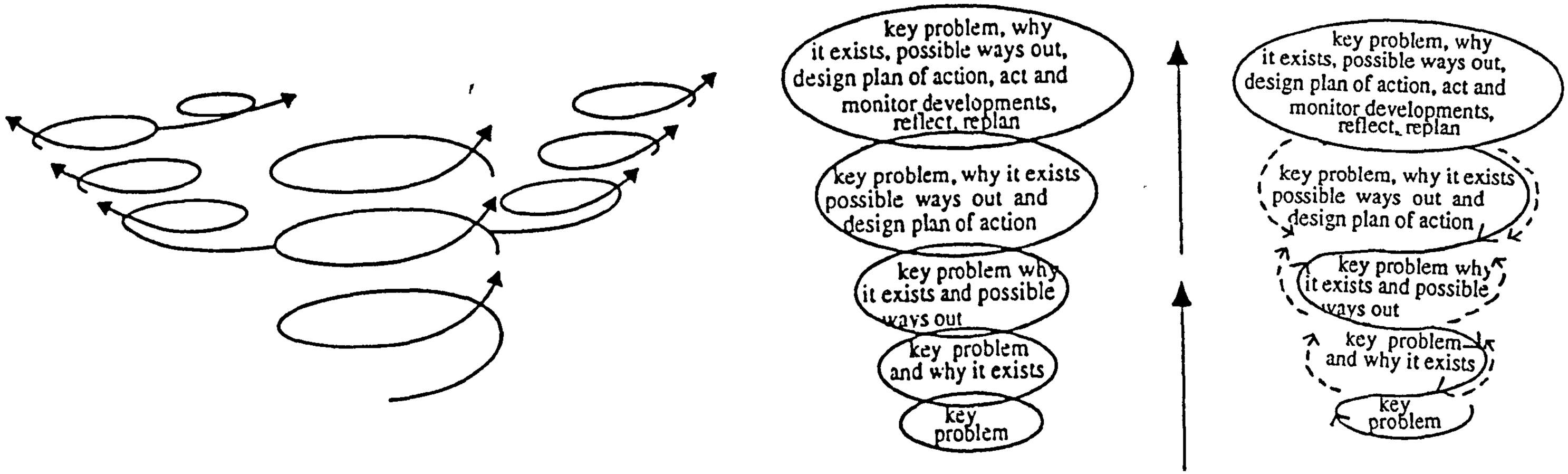


Figure 5.1 The transformation of action research

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ainscow, M. and Hopkins, D. (1992). "Aboard the Moving School" Educational Leadership, Vol. 50, No. 3, pp. 79-81.

Ainscow, M. And Tweddle, D. A. (1988). Encouraging Classroom Success. London: Fulton.

Apple, M. W. and Jungck, S. (1992). "You Don't Have to be a Teacher to Teach this Unit: Teaching Technology and Control in the Classroom" in Hargreaves, A. And Fullan, M. G. Understanding Teacher Development . New York: Cassell.

Bassey, M. (1986). "Does Action Research Require Sophisticated Research Methods" in Hustler, D., Cassidy, I. And Cuff, T. (eds.) Action Research in Classrooms and Schools. London: Allen & Unwin.

Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (1986). Becoming Critical: Education Knowledge and Action Research. London, Philadelphia: Falmer.

Clark, M. C. (1992). "Teachers as Designers in Self-Directed Professional Development" in Hargreaves, A. And Fullan, M. G. Understanding Teacher Development New York: Cassell.

Doyle, W. (1987). "Research on Teaching Effects as a Resource for Improving Instruction" in Wideen, F. M. and Andrews, I. (eds.) Staff Development for School Improvement-A Focus on the Teacher. New York, Philadelphia, London: Falmer. Education. Nicosia.

Elliott, J. (1991). Action Research for Educational Change: Developing Teachers and Teaching. UK: Open University Press.

Fullan, M. And Hargreaves, A. (1992). What's Worth Fighting for in your School? CA: Open University Press.

Fullan, M. G. (1991). The New Meaning of Educational Change. London: Cassel.

Gibbons, M. and Norman, P. (1987). "An Integrated Model for Sustained Staff Development" in Wideen, F. M. and Andrews, I. (eds.) Staff Development for School Improvement-A Focus on the Teacher. New York, Philadelphia, London: Falmer.

Gurney, M. (1989). "Implementor or Innovator? A Teacher's Challenge to the Restrictive Paradigm of Traditional Research" in Lomax, M. (ed.) The Management of Change. Cleredon, Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Hall, G. E. and Hord, S. M. (1987). Change in Schools-Facilitating the Process. New York: State University of New York Press. Suny.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). Changing Teachers, Changing Times. London: Cassell.

Hargreaves, A. and Fullan, M. G. (eds.) (1992). Understanding Teacher Development. New York: Cassell.

Hopkins, D. (1985). A Teacher's Guide to Classroom Research. USA, UK: Open University Press.

Hopkins, D. (1987). "Teacher Research as a Basis for Staff Development" in Wideen, F. M. and Andrews, I. (eds.) Staff Development for School Improvement-A Focus on the Teacher. New York, Philadelphia, London: Falmer.

Hord, S. M., Rutherford, W. L., Huling-Austin, L. And Hall, G. E. (1987). Taking Charge of Change. USA : ASCD Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Alexandria, Virginia.

House, E. R. (1981). "Three Perspectives on Innovation: Technological, Political and Cultural" in Lehming, R. and Kane, M. (eds.) Improving Schools: Using What We Know. Beverly Hills, London: Sage Publications.

Kemmis, S. (1987). "Critical Reflection" in Wideen, F. M. and Andrews, I. (eds.) Staff Development for School Improvement-A Focus on the Teacher. New York, Philadelphia, London: Falmer.

Klein, M. F. (1990). "Approaches to Curriculum Theory and Practice" in Sears, J. T. And Marshall, J. D. Teaching and Thinking about Curriculum: Critical Inquiries. New York, London: Teachers' College Press, Columbia University.

Lieberman, A. (ed.) (1988). Building a Professional Culture in Schools. New York, London: Teachers' College Press.

Lomax, P. (ed.) (1989). The Management of Change. Clevedon, Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters LTD.

Mayer, J. S. And Brause, R. S. (1991). "The Never-ending Cycle of Teacher Growth" in Brause, S. R. and Mayer, J. S. (eds.) Search and Research: What the Inquiring Teacher Needs to Know. London, New York, Philadelphia: Falmer.

Mclaughlin, M. W. and Yee, M. S. (1988). "School as a Place to Have a Career" in Lieberman, A. (ed.) Building a Professional Culture in Schools. New York, London: Teachers' College Press.

McNiff, J. (1988). Action Research: Principles and Practice. UK, USA, CA: Routledge.

McNiff, J. (1993). Teaching as Learning-An Action Research Approach. London, New York: Routledge.

Meli, H. (1990). The World of Art and I : A Student Work-Book for the Art Class. Nicosia: Ministry of Education

Miller, J. L. (1990). "Teachers as Curriculum Creators" in Sears, J. T. and Marshall, J. D. Teaching and Thinking about Curriculum: Critical Inquiries. New York, London: Teachers' College Press, Columbia University.

Oja, N. S. and Smulyan, L. (1989). Collaborative Action Research-A Developmental Approach. London, New York, Philadelphia: Falmer.

Rowland, S. (1986). "Classroom Enquiry: an Approach to Understanding Children" in Hustler, D., Cassidy, T. and Cuff, T. (eds.) Action Research in Classrooms and Schools. London: Allen & Unwin.

Rubin, L. (1987). "Curriculum and Staff Development" in Wideen, F. M. and Andrews, I. (eds.) Staff Development for School Improvement-A Focus on the Teacher. New York, Philadelphia, London: Falmer.

Rudduck, J. (1987). "Partnership Supervision as a Basis for the Professional Development of New and Experienced Teachers" in Wideen, F. M. and Andrews, I. (eds.) Staff Development for School Improvement-A Focus on the Teacher. New York, Philadelphia, London: Falser.

Rudduck, J. (1991). Innovation and Change: Developing Involvement and Understanding. London, USA: Open University Press.

Rudduck, J., Chaplain, R. and Walleye, G. (1996). School Improvement-What Can Pupils Tell Us? London: Futon

Salter, B. and Tapper, T. (1981). Education, Politics and the State: The Theory and Practice of Educational Change. London: Grant McIntyre.

Sarason, S. (1990). The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Schon, D. A. (1983).The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action. USA : Basic Books.

Sikes, P. J. (1992) "Imposed Change and the Experienced Teacher" in Fullan, M. and Hargreaves, A. (eds.) Teacher Development and Educational Change. London, Washington, D. C.: Falmer.

Smyth, J. (1991). Teachers as Collaborative Learners. London, USA: Open University Press.

Somekh, B. (1995). "The Contribution of Action Research to Development in Social Endeavours:" A position paper on action research methodology. British Educational Research Journal, Vol. 21, No. 3, 1995.

Stenhouse, L. (1975). An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development. London: Heinmann.

Thiessen, D. (1992). "Classroom-Based Teacher Development" in Hargreaves, A. and Fullan, M. G. (eds.) Understanding Teacher Development. New York, Philadelphia, London: Falmer.

Walker, R. and Adelman, C. (1975). A Guide to Classroom Observation. London: Routledge.

Wideen, M. F. (1987). "Perspectives on Staff Development" in Wideen, M. F. and Andrews, I. (eds.) Staff Development for School Improvement-A Focus on the Teacher. New York, Philadelphia, London: Falmer.

Wood, G. H. (1990). "Teachers as Curriculum Workers" in Sears, J. T. and Marshall, J. D. Teaching and Thinking about Curriculum: Critical Inquiries. New York, London: Teachers' College Press, Columbia University.

Art Curricula of Cyprus

Art curriculum for junior high school, 1973, Ministry of Education, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Art curriculum for senior high school, (no date) Ministry of Education, Nicosia, Cyprus

Art curriculum of elementary education, 1990, Ministry of Education, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Pedagogical Institute

Pedagogical Institute questionnaire. Department of research and evaluation of the Pedagogical Institute, Pedagogical Institute. (1996). Ministry of Education, Nicosia, Cyprus.

Teacher development workshops for secondary and technical education booklet. (1993). Pedagogical Institute. Nicosia.

Teacher development workshops for secondary and technical education booklet. (1995). Pedagogical Institute. Nicosia.

Art Books

Cornell, S. (1983). Art: A History of Changing Style. Oxford: Phaidon.

Craven, T. (ed.). (no date). A Treasury of Art Masterpieces - From the Renaissance to the Present Day. Fireside: New York.

Cultural Service Ministry of Education. (1988). Christoforos Savva. Ministry of Education: Nicosia.

Fry, N. (1975). Treasures of World Art. London, New York, Sydney, Toronto: Hamlyn.

Jacobs, J. (1975). The Encyclopedia of World Art. London, New York: Octopus

Jaffe, H. L. C. (ed.). (1967). 20,000 Years of World Painting. New York: Abrams

Janson, H. W. (1962). History of Art. Abrams: New York.

Nelson, G. C. (1971). Ceramics - A Potters Handbook (third edition). New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta, Dallas, Montreal, Toronto, London, Sydney: Holt, Rinehart, Winston.

Magazines

Art News. October 1990, Vol. 89, No. 8, p. 200

Art News. February 1990, Vol. 89, No. 2, p. 150.

Art News. October 1989, Vol. 88, No. 8, p. 15.

Art News. September 1989, Vol. 88, No. 7, p. 34.

Art News. February 1989, Vol. 88, No. 2, p. 70.

Art News. November 1988, Vol. 87, No. 9, p. 69

Art News. December 1987, Vol. 86, No. 8, pp. 82 and 84

Art News. October 1987, Vol. 86, No. 8, p. 47.

Parousia. (educational magazine for teachers of secondary education). Autumn 1994, No. 1.